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VICTOR EMMANUEL

BY

EDWARD DICEY, M.A.

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In Memoriam.

A. G. D.

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T. E. D.

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VICTOR EMMANUEL II.

CHAPTER I.

ITALY AND THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA.

VICTOR EMMANUEL, the last of the Dukes of Savoy, was born at Turin on the 14th of March, 1820. He died at the Quirinal, in Rome, on the 9th of January, 1878, the first of the Kings of Italy. These two dates and these two titles well-nigh comprehend in themselves the half-century of eventful history which it is my object to narrate. The life of Victor Emmanuel is, in fact, the history of Italy from the period of her deepest decline to that of her resurrection as a living nation. The record of the resuscitation of the Peninsula is, on the other hand, almost identical with the life narrative of the *Ré Galantuomo*, the "honest King," as his subjects were wont to call him. To rank Victor Emmanuel amidst the Cæsars, the Napoleons, the Cromwells, the Peters the Great—

the category, in fact, of men who alter the face of the world, for evil or for good, by the sheer force of their own individual power—would be an idle flattery. But yet it is not too much to say, that without his personality the Italy which we now know could never have been called into being. To bring about any great change in human affairs, two elements are required—the hour and the man. When the hour came for Italy to be free, Victor Emmanuel was found ready to effect her liberation. It may truly be said that, of the men who were fellow-workers with Victor Emmanuel in his life's labour, there were many whose ambitions were loftier, whose characters were nobler, whose careers were more blameless. But where others failed, he succeeded; and though the success may have been due to his failings as well as to his merits, to the accidents of his position not less than to the force of his character, the fact still remains, that by him, and by him alone, was success achieved. So long as the story of how Italy became an united and independent nation remains in remembrance, the name of Victor Emmanuel will live in the mouths of men. In telling, therefore, the life of the first King of Italy, I have to tell, in other words, how Italy became a kingdom.

In order to make this story intelligible, it is necessary first to say something of the state of things which prevailed throughout the Peninsula at the

period when the birth of a son to Charles Albert, Duke of Savoy-Carignan and heir-presumptive to the throne of Piedmont, was welcomed with popular enthusiasm at Turin as securing the succession to the reigning dynasty. Up to the closing years of the last century, Italy had preserved a certain remnant, or rather a certain tradition, of national existence. It is true that the Peninsula was parcelled out into a number of petty states, ruled over by a series of the most corrupt, retrograde, and priest-ridden governments which modern Europe has ever known. Still, though the reigning dynasties were mostly of foreign lineage and alien race, the administration of the country was, in the main, Italian in language, character, and system. The Republic of Venice survived as the shadow of a great name. Genoa was nominally an independent State. The Grand Duchy of Milan, though an appanage of the Hapsburg crown, had as little administrative connection with Austria proper as Hanover had with England. At Rome the Italian element was supreme; and in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies the vices of the Government, execrable as it was, were still of native, not foreign origin. The whole country, indeed, was so degraded and debased, so sunk in ignorance, sloth, corruption, and superstition, so weakened by artificial divisions, so distracted by local jealousies, that the sentiment of nationality could hardly be said to exist. Neverthe-

less, from the direct enslavement of foreign rule Italy was as yet comparatively free.

Then came the great French Revolution. It would be entirely foreign to my purpose to enter on any discussion as to the comparative benefits or evils which this extraordinary political convulsion entailed upon the countries who came within the scope of its action. It is enough to say that Italy, at the close of the eighteenth century, was in such a condition that any change could not well fail to be for the better, and that the French Revolution changed the whole face of the Peninsula. Under the wars of the Republic and the Empire the Italians learned again to remember that they were a nation. The petty tyrannies were deposed; the arbitrary divisions which had kept the different provinces apart were swept away; the country, for the first time since the fall of the Roman Empire, was administered with a view to general, not local interests, and a system of government was established which, however defective in itself, was liberal and enlightened in comparison with those which had preceded it. No doubt it would be easy enough to point out the defects in the Napoleonic *régime*. All I would contend for is, that to this *régime* must be assigned the first outburst of Italian nationality. As a matter of fact, for many a long year after the fall of the Napoleonic Empire, the days when France ruled

over the Peninsula were remembered by its inhabitants with feelings of gratitude and regret. That this should have been so, was due far less to the services rendered to Italy by Napoleon Buonaparte, than to the misery suffered by the country after his downfall. But the fact remains, that Italy regarded the memory of the First Empire with very different feelings from those entertained by most of the countries overrun and conquered by the armies of the great Corsican; and this fact had no small influence on the subsequent development of national feeling throughout the Peninsula.

After an interval during which Italy had once more played a part, though a subordinate one, in the world, and had known once more the excitement of active life, there followed the reaction which ensued upon the downfall of the Napoleonic Empire, and the re-establishment of the old order of things. It is not necessary to hold up to infamy the Powers who concluded the Treaties of Vienna because they sacrificed Italy to political considerations. The leading members of the European coalition, by which the colossal despotism of Napoleon was overthrown, were not in a position to realise the truth that, for better or for worse, the relations between governments and their subjects which had existed before the Revolution had passed away for ever. Their one dominant idea was, that in the future all was to be as it had been in the

past; their one wish was to blot out the very memory of the revolutionary epoch. By an unfortunate combination of events, the cause of patriotism had become identified in most countries of Europe with the cause of reaction, and the Allied Sovereigns honestly believed that they were promoting the welfare of their subjects, as well as the interests of their dynasties, by crushing out the revolutionary ideas associated with the principles of 1789. Now these ideas were supposed, with truth, to have taken far greater hold in Italy than in any of the other countries which had passed for the time under the dominion of France. The Congress of Vienna, therefore, only fulfilled what its members regarded as their bounden duty, in destroying the last traces of independence still remaining to Italy, and in replacing upon their thrones the petty princes who were most certain to uphold the principles of absolutism. In order to secure the permanent suppression of revolutionary ideas, it was deemed advisable to give to Austria, as the champion of autocratic principles, a dominant power in the Peninsula; so Austria received, as her direct share, the new Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, the richest, the most highly-civilised, and the most powerful of the Italian States. In addition to this, the Duchies of Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and Lucca were allotted to dynasties connected by close ties of kinship and still closer ties of self-interest to the House of Hapsburg. The right of

keeping a garrison at Ferrara was conferred upon Austria, with the avowed object of enabling her to exercise a general control over the Papal States; while the force of circumstances made the Government of Vienna virtually supreme at Naples.

Thus, after 1815, there was not a single capital from the Alps to the Straits of Messina, with the solitary exception of Turin, whose Court was not in direct dependence on Schönbrun, or whose state-policy was not controlled by the exigencies of Austria. The net result, therefore, of the Congress of Vienna was to deliver Italy, bound hand and foot, to the custody of the two-headed eagle. The Austria of 1815 was very different from the Austria of to-day. But even if the Government of Austria had been as liberal and enlightened as it was the very reverse, she would still have laboured under the fatal defect of being a foreign Power. It may be urged that the French were also foreigners, and yet that the rule of France was not unpopular in the Peninsula. The answer to this objection is that the French were very closely akin to the Italians, and also, that arbitrary as their rule may have been, it was not a vexatious one in matters of detail, and was almost entirely administered through the agency of natives. After 1815, however, Italy was practically governed by German administrators, and the Germans, unconciliatory and overbearing as they have always proved as rulers of alien

races, showed to special disadvantage in the Peninsula. The Italians, when they dislike a person on general grounds, say that he is *antipatico;* and the Teuton is always antipathetic to the Latin. In respect of manners, of native intelligence, and of artistic culture, the Italians had obtained a higher degree of civilisation than their German masters, and—as is the case with the Poles to-day in regard to the Russians—they felt the humiliation of a superior race subjected to the rule of an inferior. The very virtues of the Teutons—their hard strength of will, their rough sense of duty, their harsh contempt of the arts by which the weak circumvent the strong—were almost as distasteful to the Italians as their masterfulness and their brutality. Still, uncongenial as the northern race is to the southern, the Italians might have learned to acquiesce in the domination of Austria, if that domination had been conducted with an honest view to the benefit of Italy. As a matter of fact, however, the rule of Austria in the Peninsula had in view two objects, and two objects only. The first was to extract as much money as possible out of the Italian provinces for the benefit of the Austrian Treasury. The second was to suppress, with an iron hand, every movement which tended towards the recovery of political freedom, or towards the establishment of national independence. How the Italians learned to hate the *Tedeschi;* how this hate was

returned with interest; how tyranny begat revolt, and revolt led to reprisals, will be shown as this story proceeds. I need only say now, that, from its very outset, the rule of Austria over Italy, as established by the Congress of Vienna, was a burden heavier than her people could bear. From 1815 to 1859 the whole history of the Peninsula consists in a long series of efforts to throw off the incubus of Austrian dominion. To explain how these efforts proved ineffectual so long as they were initiated by revolutionary movements, and how they were crowned with success after the leadership of the national cause passed into the hands of the House of Savoy, is to fulfil the task I have undertaken, to narrate the life of Victor Emmanuel.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOUSE OF SAVOY.

"THE history of the Sardinian States"—so wrote a chronicler in the days when an united Italy was scarcely dreamt of as a possibility of the remote future—"is identical with that of the House of Savoy; for, unlike some compact European kingdoms, the various and heterogeneous parts, of which the Sardinian monarchy is composed, have been gradually united through the personal exertions of its Sovereigns, that dynasty having become their common bond of union, and having succeeded also in creating a sort of national spirit where there was no common nationality." A certain power of assimilation has, indeed, characterised the royal race whose hereditary destiny was accomplished in the person of Victor Emmanuel. As to the origin of the race, it has long been a matter of dispute amongst the students of heraldic lore. There are some who trace the House of Savoy to Witikind, a Saxon chief who for a brief period withstood the power of Charle-

magne. Others, again, derive its descent from Berengarius, Marquis of Ivrea, who in his day assumed the title of King of Italy. All that is positively known is, that eight centuries, or thereabouts, before the subject of our memoir was born, there lived a certain Humbert, nicknamed the White-handed, Count of St. Jean de Maurienne, a little town at the northern end of the valley which leads up to the Mont Cenis pass, who was a vassal of the kingdom of Burgundy. For his services to his Suzerain the Count was entrusted with the custody, not only of Savoy, but of Aosta, on the southern slopes of the Alps. It would be impossible to give here any outline of the history of the Counts of Savoy. How, in endless succession, Humberts and Philiberts and Amadeuses followed one another is recorded in the chronicles of Europe, and notably in the annals of its wars. The descendants of Humbert the White-handed were a race of soldiers, and in all the innumerable campaigns waged during the course of centuries between Norman and Saxon, between France and Burgundy, between the Empire and its feudatories, between Spain and the Low Countries, between Guelph and Ghibelline, between Catholic and Huguenot, between the Cross and the Crescent, the Counts of Savoy may be found fighting sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, but, whatever might be the issue of the conflict,

adding bit by bit to their dominions, and advancing step by step towards the fertile plains which stretched southwards of their Alpine home. Needy, brave, and unscrupulous, gifted with a strange medley of daring regulated by prudence, of fanaticism tempered with state-craft, they fought for their own hand, and seldom fought in vain. Protected by the inaccessibility of their mountain fastnesses, and still more by the poverty of their soil, they somehow escaped absorption by the great Empires with whom, and against whom, they fought in turn. Ever and anon they lost for a time portions of the possessions they had won for themselves by battle or marriage or intrigue. But, in the long run, they succeeded in keeping what they once had got.

The recital of a few dates picked out well-nigh at hazard from the chronicles of Savoy may, perhaps, best serve to show the process by which the ancestors of Victor Emmanuel extended their dominions. In 1131, Amadeus the Third made himself, by conquest, Lord of Turin. In 1312, the Emperor Henry of Luxemburg bestowed the province of Asti upon Amadeus V. as a reward for his services to the Empire. In 1388, Amadeus VII. was elected Sovereign of Nice by the citizens of the province, in order to secure his protection during the troubles which arose from the disputed succession of Queen Joan of Naples. In 1416, the Emperor Sigismund bestowed

upon the Counts of Savoy the title of Dukes. In 1560, Emmanuel Philibert purchased the Principality of Omaglia. In 1631, Victor Amadeus I. obtained the Marquisate of Mont Ferrato by the Peace of Cherasco. In 1720, the Island of Sardinia was ceded by Spain to Victor Amadeus II. in virtue of the Treaty of London, and the title of the Kings of Sardinia was then conferred upon the Dukes of Savoy. Finally, at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1747, the valley of Novara and the province of Voghera were added to the Sardinian kingdom.

Thus, at the end of the last century, the sometime Counts of Savoy had become the sovereigns of a kingdom which extended from the Lake of Geneva to the Mediterranean, which occupied the major portion of the Riviera di Ponente, and which included the island of Sardinia. This kingdom they had won province by province, and had contrived to weld together as well as to win. It would seem as if they had chosen for the guiding rule of their policy the saying of Machiavelli, that Italy is an artichoke which must be eaten leaf by leaf. It should be stated also to their credit that, according to the old-world standard, they ruled their states justly and honestly. At any rate, they succeeded in inspiring their subjects with a belief that they were genuinely anxious to promote the welfare of their people; and this belief stood them in good stead in the troubled times that

were then at hand. The French revolutionary armies overran the Sardinian kingdom as they did the rest of the Peninsula, but only after a severe and protracted resistance. Savoy and Nice were first of all annexed to France, and the fortresses of Piedmont were garrisoned by French troops. Finally, in 1804, the whole of the mainland possessions of the House of Savoy were incorporated in the Napoleonic Empire. Thereupon, the then King, Victor Emmanuel I., retired to the island of Sardinia, where he was left undisturbed, owing to the fact that the waters of the Mediterranean were practically commanded by the British fleets. It was only in 1814, upon the downfall of Napoleon, that Victor Emmanuel quitted Sardinia to return to Turin.

Ten years of absence had not impaired the affection entertained for the Savoy dynasty by its subjects. Even the restoration of the old *régime*, in lieu of the new order of things introduced under the rule of France, inspired little or no regret in the Sardinian States. In every other state of the Peninsula, even where the people had hailed the overthrow of Napoleon as a national triumph, there was a French malcontent party, composed chiefly of the educated classes, who, even if they did not openly regret the Empire, regretted the system of administration which had prevailed under the Imperial rule. In Piedmont, however, the satisfaction of the nation at

the restoration of the national dynasty was unchequered. In the first place, the House of Savoy, unlike the other reigning families of the Peninsula, was emphatically a national one ; in the second place, the defects, great as they were, of the old system of government which prevailed in Piedmont before the French Revolution, and which was restored after the abdication of Fontainebleau, were due rather to the imperfect civilisation of the kingdom than to any inherent antagonism between the Sovereign and his people. Be this as it may, Victor Emmanuel was welcomed as a deliverer on his return to Turin. He was under no necessity to vindicate his royal authority by the punishment or proscription of those who had served under the French. All that was done was to re-establish the old system of personal rule after the old fashion, and this change was effected almost without a protest even on the part of those who felt that that system had outlived its day.

The old fortune of the House of Savoy remained faithful to the dynasty even in the person of one of the most peaceful and unenergetic representatives of the race. In accordance with the traditions of the past, the Congress of Vienna enlarged the dominions of the Sardinian kingdom by adding to it the territory of Genoa. Republics were out of favour with the Allied Sovereigns ; and so, while every petty prince was restored to his throne in the Peninsula after the

downfall of Napoleon, Genoa la Superba was ceded as a gift to the neighbouring State of Piedmont. But, though little heed was paid at the time to the wishes and interests of the Genoese, the arrangement in question—unlike most of the arbitrary proceedings of the Vienna Congress—proved satisfactory to the people whose destiny was thus decided for them without their voice or will. The Genoese Republic had degenerated into an effete oligarchy, and had lost all hold upon the affection of its citizens; the material advantages of incorporation with Piedmont were great and obvious; and the reputation for good sense and loyalty of purpose which had been acquired by the Sardinian monarchy reconciled the Genoese to the loss of their historic independence. It is a striking testimony to the power of assimilation possessed by the House of Savoy, that, with one exception, the Genoese never made any serious effort to recover their separate existence, and that before the generation which had grown up to manhood under the rule of the Republic had passed away, Genoa had become as loyal and as contented with her lot as the older provinces of the kingdom. Meanwhile, at the very moment when the cession of Genoa had finally converted the kingdom, whose birthplace was a petty town in Savoy, into an important Mediterranean power, the reigning branch of the Savoyard dynasty was drawing to a close. Victor Emmanuel I. was

already advanced in years when he was restored to the throne in 1814, and was childless. His heir was his brother Charles Felix, who was but little younger than himself, and who also had no male progeny. With the death of Charles Felix the direct line was therefore certain in all human probability to come to an end.

In 1814, the heir-presumptive to the throne was the head of the cadet branch of Savoy-Carignan. Two centuries before the period with which we are concerned, Victor Amadeus I. had died, leaving two infant sons and a brother, Thomas, Prince of Carignan. The widow of Victor Amadeus, a princess of the House of Bourbon, was proclaimed Regent under the protection of a French army. The widow's claim to the Regency was disputed by her brother-in-law, Prince Thomas, who called in the aid of Spain to deliver the kingdom from the domination of France, whose policy was at that time directed by the genius of Richelieu. For some years Piedmont became the battle-field of French and Spanish armies, till at last —after a fashion characteristic of their race—the rival Regents came to a secret understanding, by which they contrived to rid themselves of both French and Spanish protection. The eldest son of the late King was allowed to succeed to his father's throne under the title of Charles Emmanuel II., and his uncle, Prince Thomas, was appointed Governor of the Province of

Asti. Of this Thomas, the lineal descendant in 1814 was Charles Albert, Prince of Savoy-Carignan; and though at the date of his birth his prospect of succeeding to the throne seemed a very slight one, yet as years passed by, and the King and his brother advanced in years, and the probability of either of them having a son became more and more remote, it grew almost certain that in the course of nature this distant cousin would succeed to the historic inheritance of the House of Savoy.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEAPOLITAN CONSTITUTION.

IN the year 1817, Charles Albert, being then, as I have said, heir-presumptive to the throne of Sardinia, married the Princess Maria Theresa, Arch-Duchess of Austria, daughter of Ferdinand III. of Tuscany, and sister of the reigning Grand Duke Leopold II. The bridegroom was but little over nineteen, the bride was under seventeen, and at the outset everything seemed to augur well for the happiness of the youthful couple. On the 14th of March, 1820, the Princess gave birth to a son, who, in compliment to the Sovereign of Piedmont, was christened by the name of Victor Emmanuel. Strangely enough, the mere fact of this baby being in existence exercised, within a few months of his birth, an important influence on the fortunes alike of Italy and the House of Savoy. How this came to pass can—in common, for that matter, with almost every other incident of Victor Emmanuel's life—be narrated only by recording the vicissitudes through which Italy

worked out her way to freedom at home and independence abroad.

For some four years after the final downfall of Napoleon the Great, everything remained quiet throughout the Peninsula. The country was exhausted by the wars of the Empire; the excitement created by the restoration to their thrones of the exiled Sovereigns encouraged the hope that better days were in store for their subjects; and the apprehension caused throughout Europe by the return from Elba consolidated the power of the Holy Alliance, and of the principles which it represented. It is possible, indeed, that if the "Hundred Days" had never existed, Europe, and especially Italy, might have been spared much of the struggle which arose subsequently from the conflict between the old ideas of autocratic rule and the modern theories of popular self-government. In 1814, there existed the materials for a peaceful understanding between the rulers of the Peninsula and their subjects. Both Princes and peoples rejoiced alike at the overthrow of the Napoleonic rule, and at the recovery of their old independence. They were alike weary of the excesses with which the French Revolution had become identified in their minds; and they were both not indisposed to judge favourably of each other. But the unexpected re-instalment of Napoleon on the throne of France at the very moment when his downfall was regarded as final, the

extraordinary power which his name was shown to possess even after his defeat, and, above all, the popular sympathy which was manifested on his behalf, frightened the Governments of the Continent out of their senses. A conviction gained ground that the revolutionary spirit of which France was the symbol still threatened the very existence of social order; and on the strength of this conviction, every idea which seemed to harmonise, however remotely, with the theories of the Revolution was regarded as a danger to society. The consequence was that, after Waterloo, reactionary principles of government were re-asserted throughout the Continent with increased stringency. This was notably the case in the Peninsula, where the antagonism between despotism and progress was enhanced by the hereditary animosity between the Teuton and the Latin. A few years of autocratic rule, under which Church and State were administered by the same combination of political and ecclesiastical influences, sufficed to create in Italy a reaction of popular sentiment, which was sure to make itself manifest at the first opportunity. That opportunity presented itself in the spring of the self-same year which witnessed the birth of the young Prince of Savoy-Carignan.

In the last days of February, 1820, a revolution broke out in Spain. The object of its leaders was to restore the Constitution of 1812, which had been

suppressed on the return of the Bourbons to the throne. Owing to the remoteness of Spain, and still more to the jealousies between the chief Continental Powers, no attempt was made at the outset by France, or by any other European State, to intervene by force in the dispute between Ferdinand VII. and his subjects. The Revolution proved successful, and for a short time the Spaniards obtained possession of a democratic Constitution. Their success stirred up the ardour of the Liberal party in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and before many weeks were over a revolutionary movement occurred at Naples. The insurrection originated with the army under the command of General Pepé, and it is worthy of note that the movement was not directed against the reigning dynasty, and was not, even nominally, associated with any demand for national unity. All the insurgents asked for was the establishment of a Constitution similar to that then existing in Spain. After a very brief and feeble resistance, the King yielded to the demands of the military conspirators, who were strongly supported by popular feeling. On the 1st of October, a Parliament of the Neapolitan kingdom was opened by His Majesty Francis the First, who then and there took a solemn oath to observe the Constitution, and even went out of his way to profess his profound attachment for the principles on which the new Government was based. General Pepé there-

upon resigned the Dictatorship he had assumed, and constitutional liberty was deemed to have been finally established in Southern Italy by a bloodless revolution. The rising on the mainland was followed after a brief interval by a popular insurrection in Sicily. The main object, however, of the Sicilian Constitutionalists was to bring about a legislative separation between the island and the kingdom of Naples proper. At that period the idea of national unity had made so little progress that the Neapolitans were regarded by the Sicilians as foreigners. The story of the Sicilian Revolution, of the savage excesses by which it was disgraced on both sides, and of the gallantry with which the insurgents held their own month after month against overwhelming odds, has too little direct bearing on the subject of this narrative to require more than a passing mention. For my purpose, it is enough to say that the Sicilian insurrection afforded Francis I. the pretext he had looked for, from the commencement, for overthrowing the Constitution to which he had personally plighted his faith. The Allied Sovereigns took alarm at the outbreak of the revolutionary spirit in Sicily, and a Congress of the Great Powers was convoked at Laibach to consider what steps required to be taken for the protection of social order in the kingdom of Naples. In order to show the spirit in which this Congress was convoked, and the

principles which the Holy Alliance adopted in respect of the Government of the Peninsula, it may be well to quote the words of the collective declaration issued at this juncture by the Governments of Austria, Prussia, and Russia. "The events that have recently taken place in Naples have necessarily created a sentiment of profound uneasiness in the minds of the Sovereigns who have charged themselves with the duty of watching over the tranquillity of Europe. They have recently crushed the Revolution, and yet they now find that it is still alive. They have, therefore, recognised the necessity of meeting together in order to consult as to the best means of averting the calamities which threaten to fall once more upon Europe. It was natural that, in order to combat the Revolution for the third time, they should resort to the same means which they adopted with such happy results in the memorable struggle which freed Europe from the yoke it had borne for twenty years. There was every reason to hope that the Alliance—formed as it was under circumstanees of extreme difficulty, and crowned with the most brilliant success—which had prepared, founded, and consolidated the peace of the world, and had freed the Continent of Europe from the military tyranny of the representatives of the Revolution, would also prove successful in crushing a new power not less tyrannical nor less terrible than that of the Revolution, namely, the

power of popular revolt and disloyalty. Such are the motives and the objects of this meeting of the Allied Powers. They have, therefore, agreed to hold counsel together, and, if necessary, to take up arms in common with the view of putting an end to the disturbances in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. They have agreed, further, to invite his Majesty Francis I. to betake himself to Laibach, in order that, being thus at liberty to act independently, he might be in a position to serve as a mediator between his misguided subjects and the States whose tranquillity is threatened by their excesses." The Governments of France and England were formally invited to attend the Congress, and though they both declined doing so, on the plea of their doubting the immediate necessity for a military intervention, they expressed a qualified approval of the general principles laid down in the Laibach manifesto.

By the Neapolitan Constitution the Sovereign was not at liberty to leave the kingdom without the consent of the Parliament. This consent was only given, after much hesitation, in reliance upon the reiterated assurances of the King, both publicly and privately, that his one object in attending the Congress was to avert, if possible, a foreign intervention. His Majesty also pledged himself most solemnly not to sanction any change in the Constitution to which he had sworn allegiance, and in the event of foreign intervention

taking place notwithstanding his efforts, he promised further that he would not be a party to any reprisals being inflicted upon his subjects for the part they might have taken in the establishment of Constitutional liberty. As soon, however, as Francis the First had arrived at Laibach, he yielded without a protest to the alleged necessity for a foreign occupation of his kingdom, with the avowed object of putting down the Constitution. Without any delay being given, the Austrian regiments crossed the frontier, preceded by a manifesto from the King, calling upon his faithful subjects to receive the army of occupation not as enemies, but as friends. The Constitutionalists were too weak in themselves, and too much divided by local and personal jealousies, to offer any effective resistance. The national troops, under General Pepé, were defeated with ease by the Austrians, who in the course of a few weeks effected, almost without opposition, the military occupation of the whole kingdom. Forthwith reprisals commenced in grim earnest. On the plea that the resistance offered by the Constitutionalists to the invading army constituted an act of high treason, the King declared himself absolved from all promises he had given previously to his departure. A reign of terror was set on foot, under which the laws were set at nought, and the lives and liberties of the Neapolitans were placed at the mercy of Special Commissions for the

purpose of detecting and punishing those who had been guilty of offences against the State. Practically, all persons who had supported or sympathised with the Constitutional cause were deemed to fall under this category. There is nothing to be gained by repeating the cruelties which were perpetrated after the restoration of absolute government by the armies of Austria. It is enough to quote the words of a historian whose sympathies with the popular movement in Italy are of a very moderate, if not lukewarm character. Signor Botta thus sums up the net result of the punishments inflicted after the return of the King in the Neapolitan provinces alone. "About a thousand persons were condemned to death, imprisoned, or exiled. Infinitely greater was the number of officers and officials who were deprived of their posts by the Commissions of Investigation. Some of these men had undoubtedly been guilty of treason. Most of them were only guilty, or even suspected of being guilty, of Liberal proclivities. Not a few amongst them were men of remarkable talent and intelligence, far superior to the persons by whom they were replaced in the public service. Thus their ostracism inflicted the gravest injury upon the interests of the State."

I have dwelt upon the Neapolitan Revolution, and on the circumstances of its suppression, not so much for its intrinsic importance, as because it created a

well-nigh insuperable barrier to any subsequent understanding between the Italian people and their rulers. The rise, decline, and fall of the Neapolitan Constitution impressed indelibly upon the minds of the Italians a conviction that no faith could be placed upon the promises of Sovereigns, and that any attempt to introduce Liberal institutions in the Peninsula would be put down by the armed might of Austria. This conviction had no small influence on the course of subsequent events.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INSURRECTION IN PIEDMONT.

THE establishment of Constitutional Government in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and the resolution adopted at the instigation of Austria, by the Congress of Laibach, to suppress the Neapolitan Constitution by armed force, produced a profound effect throughout Italy, and especially in Sardinia. The fact that internal reforms were incompatible with the ascendency of Austria in the Peninsula was brought home to the popular mind, and, for the first time in the history of Italy, the desire for civil liberty became identified with the national aversion to foreign rule. In Piedmont there was a powerful Constitutional party, composed chiefly of professional men, and a strong military caste, aristocratic by birth and conviction, but opposed on national grounds to the domination of Austria over Italy. These two parties coalesced for a time upon the common platform of Constitutional Reform and

war with Austria; and the result was the abortive rising of 1821. The insurrection, however, though directed against the established Government, had about it nothing of an anti-dynastic, or even of a revolutionary character. On the contrary, the leaders of the revolt professed, and probably with sincerity, that they were carrying out the true wishes of their Sovereign. Their theory was, that Victor Emmanuel I. was only compelled to adhere to the Holy Alliance by considerations of foreign policy, and that, if his hands were forced, he would welcome any opportunity of severing himself from all complicity with Austria. Acting on this belief, they determined to proclaim the Constitution by a sort of *coup d'état*, and then, after having declared war on Austria, to invade Lombardy, and thus create a diversion in favour of the Neapolitans. It is certain that Victor Emmanuel I. gave no sanction to, and was not even cognisant of, this mad enterprise. Indeed, the King was a man of too indolent and timid a temperament to have ever taken an active part in any bold design. The troubles and calamities of his early life had exhausted his energy; and his one desire was to live at peace at home and abroad. On the other hand, it is certain that Charles Albert was in communication with the leaders of the insurrection, though how far he was privy to their actual designs has never yet been clearly ascertained.

The insurrection broke out just about the time when the Austrian troops were approaching the Neapolitan frontiers. The first actual outbreak took place at Alexandria, where the officers of a regiment stationed in the fortress proclaimed the Spanish Constitution in the name of the King, and formed a Provisional Government. With these officers there were associated a certain number of Liberals, residents in the city; and it is curious to find in the list of the Alexdrian insurgents the name of a law student, Urban Rattazzi, who was afterwards destined to be the great rival of Count Cavour, and the Prime Minister of an United Italy. The King, who had an invincible repugnance to bloodshed, refused to take any summary measures for the suppression of the revolt, and contented himself with an ineffectual appeal to the good sense and patriotism of the insurgents. The insurrection gained head rapidly, and the example of Alexandria was followed by the garrison of Turin. Pressure was brought to bear upon Victor Emmanuel I., and he was led to believe that the only means of averting civil war was to grant the Constitution. The pressure, however, overshot its mark. On the one hand, the King felt that he could not possibly withstand the demand for a Constitution at the cost of having to order the regiments which had remained loyal to fire upon the insurgents. On the other hand, he did not feel justified in granting

the Constitution without the sanction of his brother and heir. In order, therefore, to escape from this dilemma, his Majesty abdicated suddenly in favour of Charles Felix. As, however, the new Sovereign happened to be residing at Modena, at the Court of his brother-in-law, the Prince of Savoy-Carignan was appointed Regent until such time as Charles Felix could return to the capital. Immediately upon his abdication, Victor Emmanuel quitted Turin, and Charles Albert was left in supreme authority as Regent of the State. Within twelve hours of his accession to power, the Regent proclaimed the Spanish Constitution as the fundamental law of Piedmont. The alleged reason for this extreme precipitancy was, that in the then state of popular excitement the proclamation could not be delayed without the certainty of converting the insurrection into a revolution. The probability is, however, that Charles Albert, or rather his advisers, were anxious to tie the hands of the new Sovereign. They calculated that Charles Felix, who was no longer young, and who was known to be bitterly hostile to all Liberal theories of Government, would abdicate sooner than accept the Crown of a Constitutional kingdom. This calculation proved erroneous. Charles Felix, who learned at almost the same moment that he had succeeded to the throne, and that a Constitution had been proclaimed by the Regent, took not unreasonable offence

at the haste with which this step had been taken without his even being consulted on the subject. The new King had never made any secret of his want of sympathy with Liberal ideas. In common with almost all the caste to which he belonged, he looked upon Liberalism as inconsistent with the lawful authority of Church and State. Thus, though by no means insensible to the jealousy of Austria, which was part of the traditions of his race, he was disposed to regard the Holy Alliance as the champion of law and order, and to approve of the action taken by the Congress of Laibach with respect to the Neapolitan Constitution.

Whatever other charges might be brought against Charles Felix, he is not open to the accusation of having deceived his subjects, or of having made promises for the purpose of betraying them. As soon as his Majesty learned the news of what had occurred in his absence, he issued a manifesto, declaring all the reforms granted under the Regency to be null and void, describing the authors of the Constitution as rebels, and avowing his intention, in the case of necessity, of calling upon the Allied Powers to assist him in restoring the legitimate authority of the Crown. Meanwhile, he refused to accept the throne till the restoration of order had given Victor Emmanuel full freedom to reconsider the propriety of abdication.

This manifesto was followed by the immediate advance of an Austrian *corps d'armée* to the frontier stream of the Ticino, as well as by the announcement that the Russian Government had ordered an army of 100,000 men to set out on their march towards Italy, with the avowed object of restoring order in the Peninsula. The population of Piedmont recognised at once, with their practical good sense, that any effective resistance was out of the question. Moreover, the personal influence of the reigning dynasty, even when represented by an unpopular Sovereign, was very great with the Piedmontese public, while the arbitrary mode in which the Constitution had been proclaimed excited the distrust of an orderly and law-abiding people. The courage of the insurgents gave way in view of the obstacles which they had to encounter, and the last blow was dealt to their cause by the sudden defection of the Prince Regent. At the same time as the Royal Manifesto was issued, peremptory orders were sent to Charles Albert from Modena to place himself at once at the head of the regiments who had remained loyal. The Regent's position thereupon became one of extreme difficulty. On the spur of the moment he was called upon either to desert the Constitutional cause, or to act in direct violation of the commands of the Sovereign in whose name his authority was exercised. At a later period I shall have occasion to speak of the

curious combination of inconsistent qualities which formed the character of this high-minded and ill-fated Prince. All I need say now is, that, not for the last time in his career, Charles Albert found himself embarked in an enterprise which he never ought to have commenced, or which, having commenced, he ought never to have left unfulfilled. Unable either to face his coadjutors in the Constitutional *pronunciamento*, or to assume the responsibility of an open conflict with the legitimate Sovereign, the Regent left Turin secretly, without giving any notice of his intended departure, and, on arriving at Novara, formally resigned his short-lived power.

The leaders, however, of the insurrection had committed themselves too deeply to follow the example of the Regent. A Provisional Government was established at Turin, and it was determined to march upon Novara, in the hope that the troops collected there would fraternise with the insurgents. As soon as it was known that the insurgents were advancing in force from Turin, the Austrians, under General Bübner, crossed the Ticino, and effected a junction with the Royal troops. When the insurgents reached Novara, they suddenly found themselves confronted, not by their own fellow-countrymen, but by an Austrian army. A panic ensued, and the insurrectionary force suffered a disastrous, though, fortunately, a comparatively bloodless defeat. After this

disaster the insurrection was virtually at an end; and, by orders of the King, services were held in all the churches to tender thanks for the suppression of the revolution "to the Virgin Mary, the Holy Mother of God, who has always held the royal dominions of the House of Savoy under her especial protection."

The Austrians, with the consent of Charles Felix, occupied the principal fortresses of Piedmont. The old order of things was restored, and, upon Victor Emmanuel's formal refusal to withdraw his abdication, Charles Felix assumed the title of King of Sardinia. As soon as military resistance had ceased, the insurrection was put down with a strong hand, but without anything of the sanguinary cruelty which accompanied the restoration of the Bourbons in Naples. In only two cases was the sentence of death passed upon the ringleaders of the revolt carried into execution. In both these instances the offenders were officers in active service, who had taken a prominent part in inducing their regiments to mutiny.

Charles Albert's desertion of the Constitutional cause at the very crisis of its fate did not suffice to remove the stigma attaching to him in the eyes of the Court on account of his Liberal proclivities. Charles Felix was strongly urged by the Austrian Government, as well as by the priestly *camarilla* which was then almost supreme at the Court of Turin, to formally

exclude the late Prince Regent from the succession, and thus to avert the danger of the Crown ultimately passing into the hands of a Sovereign imbued with revolutionary ideas. The advice was in itself acceptable enough to the King, who had a personal as well as a political dislike to the heir-presumptive. And if Charles Albert had been childless, the King would in all likelihood have consented to the proposal of the Austrian Government to transfer the succession either to the Duke of Modena or to some Prince who could be relied upon to support the policy of the Austrian alliance. But the strong feeling of public duty, and the deep devotion to the interests of the dynasty, which characterised Charles Felix in common with all the other Princes of the House of Savoy, outweighed the considerations which might otherwise have caused the King to exclude Charles Albert from the succession. After all, the Prince of Savoy-Carignan was not only, in his own person, the legitimate heir to the throne, but, as the father of the baby Prince Victor Emmanuel, he was the head of a family by whom the succession to the throne might still be continued in the House of Savoy. Thus, by the mere fact of his existence, Victor Emmanuel unconsciously conferred a signal service upon the cause of Italian independence, which could never have been achieved under its present form, had the Crown of Sardinia been transferred to any other dynasty than that

of Savoy. After long hesitation, it was finally agreed by the Court that no steps should be taken to change the succession for the time being, upon condition that Charles Albert gave no fresh cause of offence, and held himself aloof from all further relations with the revolutionary party.

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CHAPTER V.

THE CHILDHOOD OF VICTOR EMMANUEL.

FROM the days when Victor Emmanuel was still a babe in arms, up to the close of his tenth year, Charles Felix reigned at Turin. It was not a bright epoch of Sardinian history. The King was a man of narrow mind, strong prejudices, and burdened with a bigoted sense of his own responsibility, as the keeper entrusted by God with the care of his people's consciences. The artistic and intellectual culture which prevailed throughout Central and Northern Italy, and which in those provinces restrained to some slight degree the extravagance of despotic rule, had made but little way in Piedmont. The country was still governed by barbarous laws, enforced with the brutality of ignorance. All free thought, all intellectual life, all popular movement, were kept down in the dominions of Charles Felix by the stern rigour of the law. In the Court and in the Administration the authority of the clergy was supreme; and though, happily, Ultramon-

tanism was still an unknown development of Clericalism, there was no portion of the Italian Peninsula in which the Vatican wielded a more undisputed power than in the Sardinian provinces. As a champion of Absolutism, and of the Church, Charles Felix was naturally attracted towards Austria. But the pride of race, the instinct of royalty, preserved him from the servile dependence placed by his brother Sovereigns upon the Court of Vienna. He used his utmost efforts to get the Austrian army of occupation withdrawn from his kingdom with as little delay as might be; and on more than one occasion he offered an unexpected resistance to the dictates of Austria Moreover, in an unintelligent and unenlightened fashion, he tried honestly to promote the material prosperity of his kingdom, and administered its finances frugally and carefully.

For two or three years after the accession of Charles Felix, Charles Albert lived in quasi-exile at the Court of his father-in-law, the Grand Duke of Tuscany. It was there that his second son, the Duke of Genoa, was born. For some time it remained doubtful whether Charles Albert, though heir-presumptive, would not be declared formally incapable of succeeding to the throne, in consequence of his reputed sympathy with Liberal ideas. If any direct proof had been forthcoming of the Prince's direct complicity with the late insurrection, Charles Felix would have felt himself

justified in excluding his cousin from the succession. But no clear proof could be adduced, and Charles Felix was too just a man to act upon suspicion only. The enemies, however, of the Heir-apparent, were constantly endeavouring to poison the mind of the Sovereign against him. Under these circumstances, Charles Albert was compelled—unless he was prepared to forfeit all prospect of kingship, not only for himself, but for his sons—to keep aloof from all relations, however remote, with his former associates, and even to play a part which could not but be singularly distasteful to an upright mind.

Two years after the short-lived Constitution, based on the model of that of Spain, had been proclaimed in Piedmont under the auspices of Charles Albert, the Spanish Constitution was itself suppressed, and Absolutist rule was re-established at Madrid, by the direct intervention of France. When the army of Charles X., under the command of the Duke of Angoulême, crossed the Pyrenees in order to replace Ferdinand VII. upon his throne as an Absolute Monarch, Charles Albert, who was still residing in Florence, received an intimation from the Court of Turin that he was expected to volunteer for service in the French army. To refuse would have been not only fatal to his personal ambition—for which, to do him justice, he cared but little—but would have necessitated the abandonment of his life's hope, that of

becoming, as King of Sardinia, the liberator of Italy from Austrian rule. He yielded to the orders of the Turin Court, and accompanied the Angoulême expedition as a volunteer. True to the tradition of his race, which bade them fight with equal valour no matter what might be the cause for which they fought, he distinguished himself by his personal gallantry at the battle of Trocadero, in which the Spanish Constitutionalists were finally defeated. His active participation in this Absolutist campaign was interpreted, by friends and foes alike, as being a formal repudiation of his Liberal proclivities. On his return from Spain, he was invited to take up his abode once more at Turin as the acknowledged heir to the throne.

It would be difficult to conceive a more painful position than that occupied by Charles Albert at the Court of his cousin. Viewed with undisguised suspicion by the King and his courtiers, conscious that every word and action of his were watched by unfriendly eyes, he was not even sustained by popular favour. On the contrary, the National and Constitutional party regarded the Prince as a traitor and a renegade. And, what was even worse to his mind, he was constantly harassed by the sense of conflicting responsibilities. All this weighed heavily on a character predisposed to melancholy; and the household wherein the future King of Italy passed his childhood bore the impress of the cares and anxieties

which made Charles Albert old before his time. Turin was always a dull Court, and it was at its dullest during the reign of Charles Felix.

Whatever might be the other defects of the education imparted to Victor Emmanuel and his brother, they were not spoiled by any excessive tenderness of training. The Royal Princes rose by daybreak, studied hard, lived very simply, and were trained, almost before they were out of short clothes, to wear an uniform and carry arms. As with the Hohenzollerns, so with the House of Savoy, every Prince was born to a soldier's trade. Summer and winter, wet or dry, Charles Albert never missed the weekly reviews of the garrison of Turin at the Campo Marzio, outside the city; and at these reviews he was invariably accompanied by his two boys. Little record has been kept of their education, but in the pedagogic sense of the word, I should doubt its ever having reached any very high standard. Book-learning was viewed with suspicion at the Court of Charles Felix, as savouring of Liberalism; and, if the child was in this case father to the man, Victor Emmanuel, as a boy, could have had but little natural taste for classical or literary study. He learned, indeed, to speak Italian perfectly, as well as French, the former accomplishment being by no means a common one in Piedmont, where French was the language of society, and where the people spoke Piedmontese, a strange *patois*, inter-

larded with French and Spanish words, and in which the Italian element is barely predominant. He was also taught Latin, Roman history, the Catechism, and the art of war; and there, I suspect, his education ended. A retentive memory and a vigorous intellect enabled Victor Emmanuel in later years to pick up as much of general information as he required, but that was all. "My little Victor"—so his mother wrote of him when he was still a small child—"is very docile. I have, however, some difficulty in teaching him, for he wants to be always running or jumping; but when he once learns a thing, he rarely forgets it." The one literary effort recorded of Victor Emmanuel's boyhood, as, indeed, of his later life, consists of a school essay on the career of Amadeus VI. of Savoy, which he dedicated to his father. It is a curious coincidence that the hero of the youthful Prince's biography was the Duke of Savoy who annexed Nice and Ventimiglia to the Duchy, and thereby for the first time gave Savoy a footing on the shores of the Mediterranean.

Deficient as was, in many respects, the education imparted by Charles Albert to his children, they were brought up to be brave, honest, and truthful. They learned, too, if such things are capable of being taught, a personal love for their father and for each other not common in royal households. Indeed, Victor Emmanuel's devotion to his father's memory

is a noteworthy feature in a character little addicted to sentiment, and, in the main, of the world, worldly. Years and years after Charles Albert's death, there came back to Turin an Italian exile, who in his hot youth had been mixed up, very much against the grain, in an abortive plot for the assassination of the late King. The exile in question was a man of note and influence, who had long ago repudiated all association with Mazzini or his ideas, and who now held a position which made it a point of policy with the Italian Government to conciliate his good-will. Victor Emmanuel himself was keenly alive to considerations of policy; he was willing to accept without hesitation the services of all who could advance his ambition, no matter what offences they might have committed against himself personally in bygone years; but he refused positively—notwithstanding the representations of his Ministers—to receive at his Court a man who, however remotely, had been concerned in a plot to compass his father's death. Other sins against the State and the dynasty might find ready forgiveness, but that one never.

CHAPTER VI.

CHARLES ALBERT.

VICTOR EMMANUEL was eleven years old when his father, upon the death of Charles Felix, ascended the throne of Sardinia. With the advent to power of a liberal-minded Sovereign, destined to become the founder of Constitutional liberty in Italy, it might have been expected that there would be an immediate change in the Government of Piedmont. But no such change took place, at least outwardly. The reasons for this were various. In the first place, Charles Albert's tenure of the throne was—as he was in a position to know better than any one—singularly insecure. During the early years of his reign he was only a King on sufferance. At Vienna, where the policy of Prince Metternich ruled supreme, the young King of Sardinia was regarded with the utmost distrust. It was with well-founded reluctance that Austria had acquiesced at all in his non-exclusion from the succession. Any overt sympathy on his part with Liberal ideas, any active alliance with

the cause of the National party, might—and probably would—have entailed an Austrian occupation of Piedmont. At this period Austria was almost supreme in Italy. The revolution of July, by which Charles X. had been overthrown, had established a dynasty in France which, though more Liberal in home politics than its predecessor, was even less inclined to espouse the cause of Liberalism abroad. The main object of Louis Philippe's foreign policy was to prove to the world that his was not a revolutionary Government; and at no period in modern French history was there less likelihood of France's coming forward as the champion of Italy against Austria than in the days which followed the accession of the House of Orleans to the throne. Charles Albert was well acquainted with the views of the French Government; and he was aware that, if he succeeded in exciting the active hostility of Austria, he could not look to France for any effective protection. Then, too, the King had little or no hold upon the confidence of the Italian Liberals. Mazzini, when Charles Albert came to the throne, had just started the *Giovane Italia* association; Garibaldi had been exiled for the first time; and the dream of liberating Italy by the agency of secret societies was the craze of the hour. Not only by conspirators of the Mazzinian type, but by patriots of a far loftier order of intellect, Charles Albert was looked upon as a traitor. His desertion of the Constitu-

tionalists in 1821, his participation in the Angoulême expedition, were remembered against him in Italy, while his bygone dalliance with Liberalism was still counted at Vienna as an unpardonable sin. It was his strange fortune to be the object of Mazzinian conspiracies against his life, as a tyrant, at the very moment that his deposition as a revolutionary agent was seriously contemplated by the Holy Alliance.

Even a more decided man than Charles Albert might well have felt that the time had not yet come to declare himself openly in favour of the cause he had at heart. But I doubt whether in those days—or indeed at any period in his career—Charles Albert quite knew what he wanted, or rather whether he was willing to pay the price required for the attainment of what he wanted. A sort of modern Hamlet, it was the cursed spite of fortune that called upon him to set aright a world that was out of joint. He mistrusted at once the associates with whom, and the ends for which, he worked, and, above all, he had no firm faith in himself. Distracted between his personal sympathy with Liberal ideas, his deep devotion to the faith of his fathers, his passionate desire to see his country free, and his dread of revolutionary license, he halted between two opinions, and failed to inspire others with the confidence he lacked himself. Thus it came to pass that he, a man of singular honesty of purpose, was deemed a trickster; a man of dauntless courage,

was thought to be a craven; and a man of devout faith, was looked upon as a foe of religion. Keenly sensitive to outward impressions, he realised to the full the unfavourable impression formed of him by the outer world, and suffered therefrom bitterly, though even suffering failed to confer upon him the sternness of fibre of which he stood in need.

Throughout his life Charles Albert had a profound distrust—which he imparted to his son—in the power of the Italian revolutionists to effect anything of, and by, themselves. Upon his accession, Mazzini addressed to the young King one of his grandiloquent and declamatory epistles, calling upon him to emulate the fame of Washington and Kosciusko, and promising him the aid of twenty millions of Italians if he would only inaugurate a crusade against Austria under the patronage of the *Giovane Italia.* The offer was ignored; and forthwith Mazzini and his adherents vowed deadly and life-long enmity against the one Prince who had at heart the cause of Italy. At the same time, the priest party played upon Charles Albert's genuine attachment to the Church to estrange him from the popular cause.

At any rate, be the explanation what it may, the fact remains, that during the first years of the new reign, the years during which Victor Emmanuel grew up to manhood, Piedmont was governed on the old autocratic system. The priests were still all-powerful

at Court; no kind of political life was tolerated; Liberalism was accounted an offence against the State; and an abortive rising, in which several officers of the army took part, and which occurred in the second year of the King's reign, was put down with merciless severity. For the first twelve years of Charles Albert's sovereignty, there was as little political liberty in Piedmont as in any other part of the Peninsula. The only difference was, that the system of Absolutism, as practised in the Sardinian States, was enforced solely and entirely by native agents, and that the Court, bigoted and reactionary as it was deemed to be, still maintained an attitude of sullen hostility towards Austria. Moreover, Charles Albert, with all his apparent distrust of Liberalism, did much to pave the way unostentatiously for an era of wider liberties. He reformed the law; he mitigated the harshness of the criminal code; he removed disqualifications; he abolished monopolies; he promoted a number of schemes for the material development of his kingdom. How far he did all this with any settled purpose, with any distinct end in view, is matter for doubt. Left to himself, he would probably have vacillated to the end. Events over which he had little or no direct personal control were required to force upon him the necessity for a decision between Absolutism and Liberalism.

Meanwhile Victor Emmanuel grew up to manhood,

trained in the atmosphere of a Court simple in its tastes, sad in its habits (owing to the continual depression of the Sovereign), military in its rigid routine, and almost ascetic in character. The strong passionate animal nature of the young Prince was kept in check by a strict education, by constant military occupation, and by the influence of his father's devotion of mind—an influence which, notwithstanding his irresolution of character, made Charles Albert an object of deep respect and attachment to the few who knew him as he was. As soon as the Crown Prince came of age, a suitable marriage was arranged for him by his family. When not yet twenty-two, Victor Emmanuel married the Princess Adelaide of Austria, the daughter of the Archduke Regnier.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ELECTION OF PIUS THE NINTH.

THE years passed on. From 1840 to 1846 was a quiet era in the world's history. It was the last lustre of the forty years of peace which succeeded Waterloo. No doubt there were throughout Europe signs and symptoms of the great upheaving which was to overthrow thrones and empires and dynasties in the *annus mirabilis* of 1848. But these forewarnings were little heeded. In England the battle of Free Trade was being fought and won, and the apostles of that great movement not only professed to believe, but actually did believe, that mankind in this old world of ours had learnt the folly and wickedness of war, and were content with the peaceful victories of trade. On the Continent, though there was far less of the enthusiastic optimism which characterised the evangel of the Anti-Corn Law League, there was a general conviction that what had been would be. The fabric of things established seemed too firm to be shaken. France, under the reign of Louis Philippe, was devoted, or was thought to be devoted, to the arts of peace. The remains of

the great Napoleon had been brought back to France with solemn state and pomp, as a tribute to a legend that was forgotten, as a monument of an epoch that had faded into the past. The Syrian question, the Tahiti difficulty, the Ancona expedition, had proved mere passing disturbances, whose pacific termination only seemed to show how firmly the peace of Europe was fixed and founded. In Germany, the Bund slumbered on, the shadow of a great name. Prussia was engaged in ecclesiastical controversies of no interest to the world at large. Russia reigned supreme at all the Courts of the Fatherland; and Austria, under the rule of Prince Metternich, presented the dead weight of stolid resistance to all change or progress. The world was too weary on the one hand, too prosperous on the other, to pay heed to the cry of oppressed nationalities, or to have any faith in the power of popular agitation against established Governments. At no time, indeed, during the present century, was the prospect of an United Italy apparently so remote, or so unlikely to be realised, as in the last years which preceded the advent of Pio Nino to the Papal throne.

In all the Peninsula there prevailed a dead, dull calm, which was deemed to be the lassitude of exhaustion. In the kingdom of Naples every vestige of political freedom or public life, or even of material progress, had been crushed out of existence. The

Austrian provinces were quiet, and it was thought that Lombards and Venetians were at last becoming reconciled to the rule of Vienna. In Tuscany, Modena, and Parma, the Princes, supported by Austrian regiments and directed by Austrian counsellors, ruled in peace after their own fashion; and even in Piedmont things seemed to have fallen back into the old groove. Charles Albert reigned as an absolute sovereign; and the King who had once been the bugbear of Austria was regarded at Vienna with comparative favour, as a Prince who had seen the errors of Liberalism, and had reverted to the orthodox autocratic faith. It is true that Ratazzi and others were already beginning quietly to prepare Piedmont for Parliamentary institutions, but their labours were conducted under the guise of economic reforms, and attracted little notice abroad, or even within their own State. Indeed, the one sign that Italy was not altogether dead to all aspirations for freedom and independence was furnished by the Mazzinian conspiracies, which from time to time during the years of which I write broke the dull tenor of Italian history. Ever and anon the world learnt that some handful of revolutionists had raised the standard of revolt in a remote part of the Peninsula. Almost at the same time the news came that the rising had proved a failure, that the population had either stood aloof or had actually taken part against the insurgents, that

the Government forces had won an easy victory, and that the rebels had been shot down, made captive, or driven into exile. Such, with slight variations, is the history of every one of the numerous local insurrections which occurred during the period when Mazzini was the head and front of the national Italian movement. The very names of the patriots who perished obscurely for a hopeless cause are forgotten now. Even amongst Italians themselves, few, I think, could be found to tell how, for instance, the brothers Bandiera fought, were worsted, and died. Anyone who takes the trouble to search through the files of our English papers in those days will find that, when these abortive insurrections were alluded to at all, they were dismissed with curt and contemptuous comments on the criminal folly which led men to waste their lives in an insane attempt to realise an impracticable ideal. With success the estimate of mankind has, as usual, changed, and it is now the fashion to attribute the chief, if not the sole triumph of the national movement in Italy to the system of isolated risings of which Joseph Mazzini was the guiding spirit. The truth lies between these two estimates, but nearer the former than the latter. Just as, according to the old patristic saying, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, so the lives forfeited under Mazzini's orders were not altogether wasted. The futile risings, the cruel reprisals, the

heroic deaths, kept alive amongst the people the belief in the cause of Italy. But, on the other hand, the utter purposelessness of these Mazzinian conspiracies, their manifest inadequacy to attain the object they had in view, and the complete absence of support they received from the mass of the population, tended to injure the Italian cause in the public opinion of foreign countries, and to alienate from Italy the support of the Powers by which, and by which alone, her independence was capable of ultimate realisation.

Meanwhile, in all the Italian States there was none from which the signal for a national movement was so little to be looked for as from the Holy See. For some fifteen years Gregory XVI. had reigned at the Vatican. He was a man of kindly nature, but of no very lofty ambition, either spiritual or temporal. Common report described him as indifferent, if not actually sceptical, in matters of dogma. Certain it is that he had absolutely no sympathy with the Ultramontane theories, which were then first making themselves heard in the Catholic world. To preserve things as they were, to uphold the dignity of the Papacy, and to keep on good terms with the Catholic Powers, and especially with Austria, comprised all the policy the Holy Father set before him. Circumstances, rather than any inclination of his own, made him a bigot and a despot. To suppress all attempts

at free thought, and all dreams of political liberty, was incumbent upon him as an Italian Prince ruling under the protection of Austria. He had no desire, apparently, to throw off that protection. To do so would have required more energy than he possessed. Moreover, his idea—so far as he had ideas of his own—was to maintain the administration of the Church in the hands of Rome, and to keep the Papal States under the exclusive government of the clergy. Absolutism, administered by priests, was the system which prevailed in the States of the Church during the Pontificate of Gregory XVI.; and in no part of the Peninsula, not even at Naples, were the people so oppressed or so ill governed.

In June, 1846, Gregory XVI. died, full of days, if not of honours, and a Conclave was convened, as usual, to supply his place. The Papal election attracted very little attention out of Italy, and it has never been very clearly ascertained why the choice of the Sacred College fell upon one of the youngest and least known of its members—the Cardinal Mastai Ferretti. The most probable explanation seems to be, that the election was the result of a compromise, designed to baffle the nomination of more formidable candidates. The last thing anyone expected from the new Pope was that he would prove the champion of an United Italy, the apostle of a crusade for national independence.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OCCUPATION OF FERRARA.

THE advanced age to which Pius IX. lived, the eventful story of his long Pontificate, the disasters which he sustained, the blamelessness of his private life, the dignity of his outward demeanour, the charm of his venerable manner, all combined to invest him with an authority in the eyes of his contemporaries which was scarcely due to his intrinsic qualities. From various causes, both his friends and his enemies over-estimated his personal importance. He was neither the saint, sage, and martyr whose virtues and wisdom the Ultramontanes were never weary of celebrating; nor was he the tyrant and traitor whom the Italian Liberals were wont to hold up to obloquy. To speak the truth, Pius IX. was a commonplace, well-meaning, kindly man, ignorant of the world, narrow-minded and timid beyond the average of Italian ecclesiastics, whom an evil fate had placed in a position of fearful responsibility. As a parish priest, he would have gone to the grave beloved and respected. As a Pope,

he was out of his depth. His very virtues told against him. A far worse man would have wrought far less evil. A more self-indulgent and indolent Pope would have served his Church and his country more effectively. Conscientious to a degree, vain—with a vanity not so much of himself as of his office—obstinate with the obstinacy of weakness, he could neither let well alone nor make the crooked straight.

Pio Nono had begun life as an officer of the Pontifical Guards, the least martial, probably, of any military force that the world has known; and, if bygone gossip could be trusted, His Holiness, as a handsome young guardsman, had experienced and inspired more than one passion. But, while still in the prime of youth, his health became impaired, he grew weary of a life of pleasure, and took orders. His family connection helped him towards promotion, and before he was fifty he had become, first, Bishop of Perugia, and then Cardinal. His health had long been delicate, and probably he owed his election not so much to his reputation for piety as to the belief that he was not likely to live long, and that in any case he would easily be led by men of stronger mental calibre than himself. The belief proved a delusion. In common with all weak, vain men, Pius IX. was set on his own way, and his way was to reconcile the Papacy to the spirit of the age by

coming forward as the champion of national liberty and independence. The idea was, to use a French phrase, in the air. Gioberti, five years before, had broached the conception of an United Italy, under the primacy of the Holy See. Guisti has popularised the conception in his *Papato di Prete Piro.* Italian Liberals of the D'Azeglio stamp, who repudiated all complicity with the Mazzinian conspiracies, had long looked on the Holy See as the one genuinely Italian Government in the Peninsula. Lammenais and Lacordaire and Montalembert had taught in their writings that the Church of Rome was the true champion of Liberalism. So it is not strange that Pius IX. should have caught at an idea which he only half understood, and whose impracticability far stronger minds than his own had failed to realise. His kindly nature, his love of popularity, his personal sentiments as an Italian born and bred, his impatience, as Pontiff, of the dictatorial manner in which the Vatican was treated by Vienna, and the natural instinct of a new ruler to discard the example of his predecessor, all combined to throw Pius IX. into the arms of the Italian Liberals. He at once relaxed the severity of the Papal administration, released political prisoners, allowed exiles to return, promised reforms, spoke favourably of national independence, and became the idol of his countrymen. I doubt whether any of the heroes of the war of independence;

even Garibaldi himself at the height of his fame, had ever anything like the popularity enjoyed by Pio Nono during his short-lived Liberalism. The popularity was genuine enough while it lasted. Throughout Italy there was an outburst of enthusiasm. Moderate men, who were alarmed by the extravagancies of the Mazzinian school, and religious men, who shrunk from the free-thinking doctrines of the cosmopolitan revolutionary movement, felt no hesitation in joining a cause on which the Head of the Church had pronounced his blessing. The Pope was looked upon, abroad as well as at home, as the champion of Italian nationality. Nowhere was the adhesion of the Papacy to the cause of Italy hailed with more enthusiasm than at the Court of Turin. To have the Pope on his side in a crusade against Austria was to Charles Albert, personally as well as politically, an incalculable advantage. The fears, hesitations, traditions, prejudices, which had hitherto kept him halting between Liberalism and Absolutism, ceased to operate as soon as he could flatter himself that he had the sanction of the Church in his design of making Italy free from foreign domination.

Meanwhile, at Vienna the attitude of Pius IX. created the utmost astonishment and irritation. According to a well-known saying of Prince Metternich's, the possibility of a Pope becoming a Liberal was the one contingency left out of account in all the calculations on

which the policy of the Empire had been based. In the days which preceded 1848, the Government of Austria was but feebly administered. The Emperor Ferdinand was an absolute nonentity. Prince Metternich was growing old, and the whole fabric of the Empire was falling to pieces beneath the strain of the disintegrating forces which were shortly to burst into action. As a result of this state of things, the local administrators were allowed an unwonted freedom of initiation. Before any decision had been come to at Vienna as to the policy best suited to the interests of Austria, in view of the Liberal proclivities professed by the Vatican, the Lombardo-Venetian Government had determined that the danger was one which called for immediate repression. Nor from their own point of view were they in error. The rule of Austria in Italy was incompatible with the development of a national movement inaugurated by the Papacy. In other words, the alliance between the Holy See and the Italian Constitutionalists was inconsistent with the principles of absolutist rule to which Austria stood pledged. At that period, General Radetsky was the guiding spirit of the Austrian administration south of the Alps. Though old in years, the Field Marshal still retained the iron will, the sternness of purpose, the mastery of character, the loyalty of heart, which form the characteristics of the higher types of any ruling race. He knew of no

law except duty to his Sovereign ; and, seeing danger, his instincts led him to meet it boldly. It was resolved, therefore, at Milan, to make a demonstration which would convince the Vatican that even the authority of the Holy See would not induce Austria to tolerate any interference with her ascendency in the Peninsula. By the treaties of Vienna the Austrians were entitled to keep a garrison in the fortress of Ferrara, though the city formed an integral part of the Papal States. In the summer of 1847, when the enthusiasm in favour of the Liberal Pontiff was at its highest, the commandant of the citadel of Ferrara received orders from Radetsky to occupy the surrounding city. This occupation, effected as it was without the consent or knowledge of the Vatican, was a distinct violation of Papal territory. The Pope was indignant beyond measure, and protested vehemently against this infraction of his sovereign authority. The Italians resented the act all the more bitterly because it was believed, and with reason, that the occupation was intended as a reprimand to the Holy Father for the sympathy he had displayed for the national cause. In Piedmont this resentment manifested itself more significantly than elsewhere. Charles Albert proclaimed openly that he considered the outrage offered to the Pope as one to which he had himself been subjected. A State Council was held, at which it was determined to offer armed

assistance to the Holy See, in order to free Ferrara from foreign occupation; and it is noteworthy that at this Council Victor Emmanuel took the lead in recommending an immediate declaration of war against Austria. War seemed inevitable, when suddenly the Government of Vienna came to the conclusion that the occupation of Ferrara was a mistake, and recalled its troops. But the collision was only postponed, and Charles Albert stood ready, waiting only for an opportunity to fight the battle of Italy under the banner of the Papacy.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SPRING OF 1848

TO those who are old enough to let their memories wander back some three decades or more, there is one year, amidst all those that have come and gone within their lifetime, which stands out alone, distinct, apart. This year is 1848, when the whole mainland of Europe was convulsed with revolution—when thrones, constitutions, dynasties, tottered to the ground like a house of cards blown down by the wind. But, of all the countries over which the hurricane of revolution passed, none suffered so much as Italy. Already, in the months which preceded that memorable year, there had been symptoms of the coming storm. In the last days of 1847, the Archduchess Marie Louise, the widow of the Great Napoleon, died at Parma, the capital of the Duchy over which she had reigned since the downfall of the First Empire. At the Congress of Vienna a provision had been made for the ex-Empress at the instigation of Austria, in virtue of which the sovereignty of Parma had been assigned to her for

life, and to her son, the Duke of Richstadt, after her. An elaborate arrangement was entered into at the same time by the Allied Powers, to provide for a succession to Parma in the event of the sovereign dying childless. By this arrangement it was agreed that, in the above event, Parma should be ceded to the Duke of Lucca, who, in his turn, should surrender Lucca to Tuscany; while the latter state was to compensate the Duke of Modena, by ceding certain Tuscan districts to be incorporated with Modena. At the time of its conclusion, this family compact, which was designed to conciliate the conflicting interests of various branches of the House of Hapsburg, was deemed natural enough. But things had changed between 1814 and 1847. In the latter year, when the National movement had assumed fresh development under the auspices of Pius IX., this wholesale transfer of Italian populations from one dynasty to another, without their will or consent, in order to suit the personal convenience of a number of Austrian princes, was regarded as a public scandal and outrage. There were disturbances at Modena, and the Austrians proceeded to occupy the Duchy at the request of the reigning Duke. Riots ensued at Milan, Lĕghorn, and Messina. In the first days of January an insurrection broke out at Palermo. A provisional government was forthwith established, and the insurgents held their own at the outset against the royal troops who

were sent to put down the rising. Upon the intelligence of this outbreak reaching Naples, a popular demonstration was made in favour of a constitutional government; and in accordance with the traditions of his race, King Ferdinand II. yielded to fear what he had refused to argument. A constitution was proclaimed once more by a royal manifesto. By this proclamation, ministerial responsibility, freedom of the press, trial by jury, parliamentary representation, and parliamentary institutions were guaranteed for ever to the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

The action of Naples decided that of Piedmont. Charles Albert's hesitation was finally overcome; and on the 8th February, 1848, the King issued a proclamation announcing his intention of governing henceforth as a constitutional monarch. Tuscany within a week followed the example of Piedmont; and the Pope summoned a consistory to discuss the propriety of establishing political liberty in the Papal States. To these demonstrations Austria responded by proclaiming martial law throughout the Lombardo-Venetian Provinces. From causes of which I have already spoken, the agitation for constitutional government in the Peninsula was in reality an agitation for national unity and independence; and Austria had no alternative except either to crush out this constitutional agitation, or to surrender her supremacy south of the Alps.

War had thus become inevitable in Italy, but its actual outbreak was precipitated by the course of events in France. Before the month of February had ended, the Monarchy of July was overthrown, Louis Philippe was an exile in England, and the Republic was proclaimed in Paris. In the first circular despatch addressed by Lamartine as President of the Provisional Government to the agents of France abroad, it was stated that, though the Republic recognised the territorial arrangements concluded by the Treaties of Vienna, yet that "if the hour for the reconstruction of oppressed nationalities had arrived, and if the Independent States of Italy should be invaded, then the Republic would deem herself justified in taking up arms." These words of the poet-president rung throughout the Peninsula as an appeal to insurrection. Meanwhile, the tide of revolution was spreading everywhere. The Hungarian Diet, on the proposal of Kossuth, demanded re-establishment. One German Government after another hastened, of its independent authority, the coming shock, by making concessions which for years past had been peremptorily refused. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that, during the month of March, 1848, not a single day passed without a constitution being granted somewhere. To quote Lamartine's phrase, the *Souffle de la Liberté* had breathed over the Continent, and everywhere

the popular cause was triumphant. A Parliament was convoked at Frankfort, whose function was to create an United Germany upon a democratic basis. The agitation reached Vienna, which had hitherto been regarded as the stronghold of Absolutism. Prince Metternich resigned, and a constitution was proclaimed. Then came news of an insurrection at Berlin, and of the troops having refused to fire upon the insurgents. At Munich a revolution broke out which necessitated the abdication of the old King Lewis, and the flight of his mistress the Countess Landsfeldt, better known as Lola Montez.

As yet there was no indication that the revolutionary tide was on the turn; and it became a certainty that the example of the German democracy would be speedily followed south of the Alps. On the 18th of March the city of Milan gave the signal of revolt. On the day following an insurrection broke out in Parma, and the reigning Grand Duke fled without striking a blow. Indeed, sovereigns were so given to abdicate in those days of '48, that governmental resistance to any popular rising was a contingency scarcely contemplated as possible. The Milanese threw up barricades at their leisure, and still the Austrian garrison remained passive spectators of this defiance of the Imperial authority. Field-Marshal Radetsky, who was then in command, resolved to act upon his own responsibility, and to

withdraw from Milan. He foresaw that within a few days the whole of Italy would be up in arms, and with true military genius he perceived that, if Austria was to make a fight at all for her sub-Alpine provinces, it must be from behind the shelter of the Quadrilateral. But at the time this strategic movement was effected, the world at large only recognised the fact of the retreat, not its motive. It was only in accordance with all the experience of the revolutionary epoch that the armies of Austria, headed by the ablest of her generals, should seek safety in flight sooner than face a street mob; and the Milanese patriots can hardly be blamed if they imagined that they had liberated Lombardy, once and for all, by the mere display of the popular will. As soon as the tidings that Radetsky was in retreat reached Venice, a Provisional Government was proclaimed; and the Austrian commandant capitulated at once with the insurgents, on condition of his being permitted to withdraw his garrison without attack.

The hour had come when Charles Albert could hesitate no longer. Ever since the proclamation of the Constitution, the Government of Turin had been preparing openly for a conflict which was felt to be inevitable. Even if Charles Albert had cared nothing about the fortunes of Italy, and had been indifferent to the mission of his race, he could not have remained at peace without imperilling his throne. To stand

still or to go back was alike impossible; his only chance of safety lay in following the current which urged Italy on to war. A council of Ministers was held in hot haste on the 23rd of March, and upon its close a proclamation was issued, declaring war against Austria, and announcing that the Sardinian armies would forthwith cross the frontiers to assist the Lombards and Venetians in their struggle for the recovery of their independence. The council was presided over by the Premier, Count Balbo. On his reaching home, late at night, he found the Duke of Savoy waiting to see him privately. The object of the Prince's visit was to learn if a command had been assigned to him in the invading army, and to ask the Minister, in case no such command had been given, to implore the King to allow him to accompany the expedition as a volunteer.

This is well nigh the first public act of Victor Emmanuel recorded in history. The Crown Prince was then in his twenty-eighth year. Little was known of him out of the royal circle. The rigid etiquette of the Sardinian court, and the strict discipline of the Savoyard dynasty, had forbidden his taking any active part in public life. The King was still a man in the full vigour and prime of life; and the heir-apparent had little opportunity, even if he had the inclination, to identify himself with any political party or cause. His marriage with an Austrian

Princess was regarded with disfavour by the Piedmontese Liberals; while the popular distrust attaching to Charles Albert himself extended at that time to his son. It was on the field of battle that Victor Emmanuel was destined to first make himself known to the Italian people. He was appointed to the command of a division in the force prepared for the invasion of Lombardy, and for the first, though not the last time of his chequered career, before March was over, the future King of Italy had crossed the Ticino at the head of an Italian army.

CHAPTER X.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1848.

LOOKING back upon the past, with the knowledge of the present, the campaign in which Victor Emmanuel was to win his first honours seems well-nigh hopeless from the outset. But it did not so seem at the time. The Hapsburg monarchy appeared, in the spring of '48, to be on the very brink of dissolution. It was more than probable that the Austrian armies south of the Alps would have to be recalled home for the defence of the Government, and it was even possible that the supreme power at Vienna might pass into the hands of the cosmopolitan revolutionary party, whose sympathies were, or at any rate were supposed to be, enlisted in behalf of an Italian cause. Even if Austria, contrary to the expectation of the day, should really show fight, the odds in her favour were not deemed to be overwhelming. It is true that, according to official statements published shortly before the outbreak of the war, the Sardinian armies were completely

outnumbered by the forces whom Austria could place upon the field. But then Sardinia was assured of the armed support of Italy. The Governments of the Peninsula vied with one another in their professions of loyalty to the national cause, of which Piedmont had made herself the champion. The King of the Two Sicilies had already declared war against Austria, as the enemy of Italian independence. The Grand Duke of Tuscany had issued a proclamation, calling upon the Tuscans to fight side by side with the troops of Sardinia against the common foe. Parma and Modena had followed suit. The Lombards and Venetians were loud in their promises of aid to the liberating armies. Pius IX. himself had pronounced a benediction upon the Coalition arrayed in arms against Austria.

When, therefore, the Sardinian troops crossed the Mincio, even their leaders shared the enthusiasm of that passionate spring-tide of 1848. Serious opposition on the part of the Austrians was scarcely expected, and even if resistance was offered, it was believed that Italy could safely be relied upon to reinforce the national army. At first everything smiled upon the fortunes of the advancing force. It is not my object to write a military history of the Italian campaigns: I only touch upon the events of the war in as far as they are necessary to the comprehension of Victor Emmanuel's life's

story. Suffice it, then, to say that at the outset of the campaign the Austrians offered but a faint-hearted resistance to the progress of the Sardinian army. Their soldiers were discouraged, their Government was utterly disorganised, and Radetsky, with a clear grasp of the situation, recognised the truth that any partial success would be dearly bought at the cost of retarding his retreat upon the Quadrilateral, where, and where alone, there lay the safety of Austria. The march of the Sardinian troops to Milan was a triumphal progress. Charles Albert was welcomed as a liberator, and was saluted as King of Italy. On the 6th May the first serious engagement took place between the Austrian and the Sardinian armies. The scene of the action was at Santa Lucia, hard by the very spot where, a dozen years later, the fate of Italy was to be decided on the broken ground of Solferino. The fortune of war favoured the Sardinians, and Victor Emmanuel distinguished himself by the reckless valour with which he led his regiment into action. Three weeks later, the Piedmontese won a second victory at Goito. The Austrians were driven back with heavy loss, the issue of the battle being decided by a brilliant charge of the Cuneo brigade, commanded by the Crown Prince in person. Before the battle, Victor Emmanuel had expressed a characteristic hope that he might receive his first wound under fire. This hope was

fulfilled, and on being slightly wounded during the action, the Prince's only comment was, "How my brother will envy me!"

The day of Goito was the crowning point of Charles Albert's short-lived triumph. His troops had won a real victory, his sons had distinguished themselves on the field of battle, and on the self-same evening tidings reached the Royal head-quarters that Peschiera—one of the famous four fortresses which formed the stronghold of Austria in Italy, though the least formidable of the four—had capitulated to the Sardinian forces. These feats of arms were followed by popular votes, in accordance with which Lombardy, Modena, and Parma decreed their annexation to the constitutional kingdom of Sardinia.

Thus, at the end of May, all looked bright on the outside for the fortunes of Charles Albert. But to those who stood behind the scenes, and not least to the King and his sons, things wore a very different aspect. From a strategical point of view, the invading armies had made but little real progress; they had overrun the open country with ease, but Field-Marshal Radetsky had effected a junction with General Von Thurn, had collected under his own command all the Austrian forces scattered over the Lombardo-Venetian provinces, and had concentrated them within the well-nigh impregnable stronghold formed in the very heart of these provinces by the

fortresses of the Quadrilateral. Moreover, what was even of more importance to the fortunes of Piedmont, the tide of the European revolution had obviously reached its highest point, if it was not already upon the ebb. The Emperor of Austria had withdrawn from Vienna to Innsprück, and, safe in the keeping of the loyal Tyrolese, had assumed—or rather had had assumed for him by his Ministers—an attitude of independent resistance towards the revolutionary faction which had obtained control of the capital. Order was restored at Berlin. The German Parliament at Frankfort was losing ground daily, and the Provisional Government of Paris was clearly falling to pieces. Meanwhile, notwithstanding all the professions of her sovereigns, Italy had done little or nothing to support Sardinia in her unequal contest. The Neapolitan and Tuscan contingents had been defeated with ease by Radetsky at Curtatone. Early in June, Vicenza was re-taken by the Austrians, and the Papal troops, to whom the custody of the fortress had been entrusted, offered no effective resistance. These disasters were not only serious in themselves, they were still more fatal as warnings of what the future had in store. It was manifest that the Italian Governments, with the exception of Sardinia, were not really in earnest in their professed sympathy for the War of Independence. Success—brilliant and rapid success—might possibly have converted faint-

hearted and disloyal allies into sincere, if not disinterested friends. But the military success obtained so far by the Sardinian arms in the campaign, though creditable, was not more than creditable. The conjuncture was one in which the sole chance of permanent victory lay in following up the military advantages gained at the outset, without calculation of risks or dangers; but Charles Albert was not the man to disregard all considerations of prudence or caution. He hesitated, waited for reinforcements which might render his numerical inferiority to the Austrians less overwhelming, and thus lost the one opportunity which might have served his purpose. The Austrian Princes who had allied themselves to Charles Albert had, and could have, no real wish for his triumph. They had thrown in their fortunes with the national movement because they saw no other chance of keeping their thrones; but in their hearts they desired its failure, and they were anxious, above all things, to guard against any possible aggrandisement of Sardinia, to their own loss and detriment. Thus they had never consented to place their contingents in reality under the command of Charles Albert, and the operations of the war suffered grievously from the absence of any central authority or command.

All this was to be expected. Charles Albert must have known beforehand that his brother sovereigns

had only made common cause with him in obedience to the imperative demands of popular opinion. But he had every right to expect that, in the supreme crisis of the struggle for Italian independence, this self-same popular opinion would remain faithful to the cause of the one Prince who had risked everything for the liberation of the common fatherland. This expectation was not fulfilled. Then, as later, the watchword of the revolutionary party was Garibaldi's well-known saying, *L'Italia farà da se.* Amidst the men who had the ear of the masses, and who had done most to promote the movement in favour of national unity, a belief prevailed that the manifestation of the popular will would alone suffice to overthrow the rule of Austria. Republicans at heart, these men looked with distrust upon a war whose ultimate result would be the aggrandisement of a monarchy. Disciples of Mazzini, they regarded Charles Albert with suspicion. Deeming the downfall of Austria to be an accomplished fact, their chief aim and object was to hinder that downfall from reverting to the profit of the House of Savoy. While the Austrian lion was repairing his strength for a fresh attack, the Italian Nationalists were already quarrelling about the division of his skin. At Milan and Venice the Republican party concentrated their efforts on making provisions against the contingency of Charles Albert's triumph proving too

complete. The spectacle of these divisions impressed the Courts of the Peninsula with a conviction that they might safely relax their efforts on behalf of the Sardinian armies without incurring the displeasure of the national Liberals, in obedience to whose demands they had entered reluctantly upon the war.

At the turning-point of the campaign the Pope deserted the Italian cause. In the fervour of his shallow design for popularity, he had gone to the very brink of war; but when he discovered that he must actually order his troops to fight against the soldiery of Austria, his feelings as a Pontiff overcame his sentiments as an Italian. No honest man can blame the Holy Father for refusing to take part in a war between two Catholic Powers. Where he is to be blamed is for having imagined that he could play the part of a tribune of the people, and yet remain the head of the Church. The Pope's defection gave the signal for a general desertion of Sardinia on the part of her allies; and while Italy was still ringing with the tidings of the capture of Peschiera, it had already become painfully manifest to those in command of the national army that the game had been played and lost. The course of the campaign had impressed three lessons upon those who had eyes to see. The first was, that Austria could never be expelled from her sub-Alpine provinces except

through a regular war, conducted by disciplined troops; the second was, that the Italian Nationalists could not be relied upon to subordinate local and political jealousies to the liberation of their country; and a third was, that Italy must be made free, if at all, not only without the aid, but in despite of, the Holy See. These lessons no one was in a better position to take to heart than the heir-apparent to the throne of Sardinia, and that he so took them the future amply sufficed to show.

CHAPTER XI.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE WAR.

THE tide of fortune had now turned. The Pope had withdrawn his favour, the King of Naples and the Duke of Tuscany had recalled their armies, and even the Venetian and Sicilian patriots sent no effective aid to the exhausted Sardinian army—which was barely able to keep the Austrians confined within the Quadrilateral—but contented themselves with discussing the precise terms under which they would consent to incorporation in the Kingdom of Italy. At Milan, popular disappointment at the non-fulfilment of the hopes raised by the victory of Goito gave strength to the Mazzinian party, and, at the most critical moment of the campaign, the authority of Charles Albert in Lombardy was impaired by the appointment of a Committee of Defence, charged with the duty of watching over the safety of the State. The time had come for Radetsky to abandon his defensive attitude. In accordance with his long-formed tactics, the Austrian army now advanced

from behind the shelter of their fortresses, and pushed back the ill-trained and enfeebled forces of Sardinia. On the 23rd of July, the Austrians carried the heights of Somma Campagna, and, after a gallant but ineffectual resistance at Stoffalo on the part of the Sardinian regiments, they, two days later, inflicted a crushing defeat on the Italian army at Custozza. The order was given to retreat, and as any further resistance was obviously hopeless for the time being, every consideration of prudence urged the Sardinian generals to retire with the utmost speed within their own territory. But Charles Albert could not brook the reproach of having deserted the Milanese, who had saluted him as their king. He returned to Milan, with the hope of resisting the occupation of the city. The futility, however, of this hope became at once apparent: the army was discouraged; the populace, maddened by the excitement of the hour, accused Charles Albert of treachery; and the Mazzinians raised the outcry that a Republic alone could carry on a national war against Austria. The ill-fated King was hooted, insulted, outraged in the streets of the capital where, but a few weeks before, he had been welcomed as a liberator. As the invading army approached, and as the passion of the populace grew more intense, his very life was in danger. He had finally to quit Milan by stealth under cover of the night, and, in accordance with

his wonted evil fortune, he had to fly at the very moment when the enemy was at the gate, and when the demagogues who had the ear of the populace were vapouring about a heroic resistance similar to that which has made the name of Saragossa famous in history. With the flight, however, of Charles Albert, all idea of resistance was abandoned, and on the 5th of August Milan capitulated unconditionally to the Austrians. Meanwhile, the Sardinian army was in full retreat, and on the 8th of August, barely four months after a declaration of war, an armistice was concluded, by which the Sardinians abandoned all the positions they held outside the borders of Piedmont, and agreed to recall the ships and troops they had sent to the assistance of the Venetian insurgents. The defeat, in fact, was complete, crushing, and only not dishonourable owing to the gallantry displayed by the Sardinian soldiery.

Everywhere, except in Italy, the victory of Austria was regarded as final. In Piedmont, however, and in all the portions of the Peninsula where the people had risen in insurrection, the masses refused to believe that the hopes which had seemed so bright were really shattered. The armistice was looked upon as a mere respite, and a renewal of the war was clamoured for urgently. Nor was this clamour utterly devoid of reason from a popular point of view. To those, indeed, who could realise the true

position of affairs, it was obvious that the wave of the revolution had spent its strength; but to those who only judged from the surface, Europe still seemed to be drifting before a revolutionary tempest. The belief in the ultimate triumph of the popular cause was but little impaired. The collapse of the Austrian Empire through internal disorganisation seemed well-nigh certain, and a probability of French intervention on behalf of Italy was looked forward to with confidence. These illusions were not shared by the King or his Ministers; they knew too well by bitter experience how small hope there was of aid from abroad, how little reliance was to be placed upon the support of insurrectionary organisations, and how utterly inadequate the Sardinian army was to cope single-handed with that of Austria. But still, with his wonted indecision, Charles Albert halted between peace and war. It was not for him, he felt, to despair of Italy, while others still trusted in her power to free herself by force of arms. He was also influenced, we may safely assume, by the conviction that, however fatal a renewal of the war under existing conditions must be to his own fortunes, yet that it was better, for the interest alike of his dynasty and of the cause he had at heart, to risk all on a forlorn hope rather than purchase immediate security by the abandonment of all claim to the championship of Italian independence. Be this as it

may, the King resolved to abide the course of events, and consented to allow the renewal of the war to remain an open question.

How far Victor Emmanuel approved of his father's policy is not certain. During the weary interval which elapsed between the conclusion of the armistice and the resumption of hostilities, he took no part in politics, and remained with his brigade at Alexandria, occupying himself exclusively with his military duties. His efforts were devoted to the reorganisation of the Sardinian army; and in a series of letters written at this period to his old tutor, General Dabormida, which have since been published, he expresses in the strongest terms his anxieties about military affairs. In one of these confidential communications he wrote as follows:—"For goodness' sake, let me know if the Government are willing to do anything in order to provide the army with a Commander-in-Chief and a Minister of War, as the army has sad need of a Minister who understands it thoroughly, and who will work hard for its advantage, as there are so many things to be changed, so many to be organised." Again, on another occasion, the Prince alludes in the following language to the Extreme party, who were urging on the Government the expediency of an immediate re-invasion of Lombardy:—"I have great fears that this resolution, if adopted, will prove disastrous; I see with the

utmost regret that a perverse faction is anxious to force us to confront the enemy without delay, in the hope that, as to their knowledge we are not prepared at present to enter on a campaign, they will be able to build up the Republic on the ruins of the army and the country. If we are allowed some months' respite, which will enable us to put things in good order, and especially to re-establish military discipline, I believe that the enemy might receive a disastrous repulse; but if we are to invade Lombardy at once, we shall be fatally weak, and shall be defeated easily." Characteristic, too, of the man are the views he expressed at this period in an official letter to the Minister of War about the necessity of maintaining the punishment of death for military offences. "I deem it my duty," he writes, "to inform your Excellency, that amidst our soldiers there has prevailed for some time an impression that the punishment of death has been practically abolished; owing to this impression, the punishments usually inflicted by the Council of War, such as the galleys, which necessarily remove cowards from the perils of battle, are no longer dreaded, but only serve to render malingerers all the more anxious to be sentenced to the punishments in question"

CHAPTER XII.

NOVARA.

THE immediate result of the armistice was, as I have said, to give a sudden accession of strength to the Mazzinian party. The cause of Constitutional Monarchy, as represented by Sardinia, was discredited in popular opinion by the collapse of the Lombard campaign, and the leaders of the revolutionary movement, instead of making any united effort to rally round the standard of Savoy at the supreme hour of Italy's fortune, devoted their whole energies to the establishment of a Republican Federation. Venice, which had just decreed her incorporation with the kingdom of which Charles Albert was to have been the sovereign, decided after the evacuation of Milan to constitute herself into a Republic under the dictatorship of Manin. Tuscany speedily followed the example set by the Queen of the Adriatic. At Rome the extreme faction had obtained complete control of the Government. The Pope's authority was openly disregarded,

and with the assassination of Count Rossi, the ablest of the Roman patriots, there vanished a last hope of any other than a violent solution of the Papal question. Pius IX. escaped in disguise to Mola di Gaëta, on Neapolitan territory, and threw himself completely into the hands of the reactionary party. The deposition of the Pope as a temporal sovereign was forthwith decreed by the Roman Chambers; the Republic was proclaimed at the Capitol, and a Constitutional Assembly was summoned to meet at Rome, with the view of uniting the States of the Peninsula under a Federal Republic. But at Rome, as indeed everywhere else, the Republicans laboured under the fatal defect that they had no force at their back to support their theories. The name of Republic was found not to possess the magic attributed to it by the devotees of democracy; and though the Republic counted amidst its adherents many honest, faithful, and impassioned partisans, it attracted nothing that could be called a national uprising to its support. Hard and stern experience was still needed to teach the Italians that the liberation of their country must be effected, if at all, by regular armies and established dynasties, not by high-flown language, grandiloquent proclamations, mass demonstrations, cosmopolitan sympathies, volunteer levies, and democratic decrees. As yet, however, that lesson was still unlearnt, and the Italian Liberals cherished the delusion that what

the Sardinian armies had failed to effect could be achieved by the free lances of the Republic.

Meanwhile, throughout Europe the old order of things was being re-established; the revolution had been suppressed at Vienna, Berlin, and Frankfort; the Magyars had been defeated by the aid of the Russians, who had invaded Hungary. The Emperor Ferdinand I. had resigned, and had been replaced on the throne of Austria by his nephew, Francis Joseph. Everywhere the leaders of the insurrectionary movement were in prison or in exile. The reaction had set in; public opinion had been alienated from the popular cause through the excesses committed by the Revolutionists during their short heyday of power. Even the event which was destined ultimately to bring about the emancipation of Italy—the election of Louis Napoleon to the Presidency of the French Republic—was mainly due to the passionate desire for the restoration of social order which at that time formed the dominant sentiment of the hour, not only in France, but in Europe. Thus it came to pass that Sardinia, while she was regarded with distrust in Italy as a traitor to the popular cause, was viewed with disfavour abroad as a hotbed of revolution. The appeals of Charles Albert to the protection of the Great Powers met with little or no response. England and France indeed made a faint-hearted attempt to refer the settlement of the Austro-Italian question

to a Congress; this attempt, however, collapsed at once, owing to the resolute refusal of Austria to entertain any proposition which did not involve the complete restoration, throughout the Peninsula, of her own authority, and that of the Governments dependent upon her.

The armistice which had been originally concluded for six weeks was subsequently prolonged indefinitely, with leave to either combatant to terminate it at a week's notice. The Austrian armies were encamped upon the frontiers of Piedmont; their advanced posts were within a few hours' march of Turin, and still neither Charles Albert nor his people could reconcile themselves to the idea of accepting their defeat and its necessary consequences as accomplished facts. The King, in accordance with the oath he had taken upon the establishment of Constitutional Government, had convoked the Parliament to meet at Turin; and it is characteristic of the political instinct of the Sardinian people, that even in those days, when the very existence of the State was in danger, Parliament devoted itself zealously to the consideration of various measures of public utility. War or peace, however, was the one question of the hour. It was only by a very narrow majority that the Chambers consented to the prolongation of the armistice; and the war party remained masters of the situation. The constitutional inability of Charles

Albert to decide between conflicting considerations, led him to commit himself to acts and utterances which kept alive the belief that he was determined not to throw up the game without striking a last blow for Italy. Moreover, looking back upon the past, we can see that it was better for the House of Savoy that Piedmont should have courted, as she did, almost certain destruction at Novara, than that she should have abandoned the cause of Italy while she had still an army in existence. And if Charles Albert's foresight led him to come to this conclusion before the event, it was only in accordance with the higher side of his character that he should have been found ready to count his own loss a gain to Italy.

On the 12th of March, 1849, the Government of Turin announced that the armistice was at an end. Never was a war undertaken under more forlorn prospects. On the 20th the Austrians, commanded by Radetsky, crossed the Ticino; on the following day they carried Mortara by storm, and after four-and-twenty hours' rest they advanced upon Novara, which formed the head-quarters of the Sardinian army, under the command of Charles Albert in person. The battle lasted from dawn to dusk; but though the Italian troops fought bravely, all they succeeded in doing was in retarding for a time the victorious progress of the enemy. The King and his sons were constantly under fire throughout the day;

wherever the fighting was the fiercest, there Charles Albert was to be found, but, as he said afterwards, "even death proved a traitor to him;" by nightfall the Austrians were victorious all along the line. The Italians gave way; a defeat turned into a rout; and the Sardinian army for the time had ceased to exist. A story current in those days says that, as Victor Emmanuel rode away at the head of his shattered regiments from the field of battle, he turned round towards the Austrian columns, which were pressing close upon his heels, brandished his sword towards the enemy, and said with a deep curse, "*Ma l'Italia sarà.*" The saying, in common with most battle-field utterances, may very likely have been the product of some after-thought. But whether the words were used or not at the time assigned, it is certain that, from the day of Novara to that on which he entered Rome as King, Victor Emmanuel never wavered in his resolve that "Italy should be."

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE ABDICATION OF CHARLES ALBERT.

THE day on which the Sardinian armies were routed at Novara had not drawn to a close before Charles Albert had ceased to reign. When further resistance had obviously become hopeless, General Cossato was despatched to the Austrian camp to solicit an armistice. Field-Marshal Radetsky replied that he could only grant a truce upon the conditions that the Lombard insurgents who had taken refuge in Piedmont should be expelled from the kingdom, that the fortress of Alexandria should be handed over to the Austrians, and that the King should pledge himself to revoke the Constitution he had just established. The conditions in question seemed to have been purposely devised with the object of rendering their acceptance impossible, and thus affording the Austrians an excuse for marching upon Turin. The King believed—and, as the event proved, with reason—that the personal animosity entertained towards him by the Austrian Govern-

ment rendered the conclusion of peace more difficult than it would be if entrusted to other hands. In Radetsky's proclamation, on the renewal of hostilities, the Austrian general had distinctly accused Charles Albert of perfidy, and had stated that "if he could have foreseen that the dignity of Majesty would be degraded to such a pitch in the person of Charles Albert, he would not have spared the King the shame of being detained as a prisoner at Milan."

As I have before said, it was Charles Albert's evil destiny to excite the distrust alike of friends and foes. There is little doubt that, when Radetsky formulated the conditions above referred to, he did so with the intention of giving Charles Albert no choice between the alternatives of disgrace or abdication. For once, however, the defeated monarch felt no hesitation as to the course he should adopt. In the last crisis of his life, the path of duty and honour lay clear before him, and he followed it without vacillation, and without regret. Late at night, the generals in command were summoned to meet at the royal tent. There they were informed by the King, in a few simple sentences, that for him the acceptance of the terms proposed by the conqueror was an impossibility; that at the same time armed resistance was out of the question; and that therefore the only service he could still render his country was to resign his crown to one less personally obnoxious to the

enemy. Then, turning to Victor Emmanuel, he added, "Gentlemen, behold your sovereign." After that, the ex-King withdrew himself apart with his sons. The last counsels were given, the last farewell taken, and before midnight he was travelling to Genoa, under an assumed name, to take refuge in a distant land, never to look again upon wife, or children, or home, or country.

With the day of Novara the curtain falls on the career of one to whom, even after death, the world has done scant justice. Alone and unknown Charles Albert pursued his journey southward. On landing in Spain, he halted to sign the formal act of abdication, and then betook himself to the Portuguese town of Oporto, a place he had once visited before in happier days, and where he had elected to fix his last resting-place. There, in absolute seclusion, he lived on for a few months longer, devoting himself sedulously to prayer and contemplation. He was still in the full vigour of manhood; his constitution was strong, he had no special malady; he had lost the game, that was all which ailed him. His part in life was played out; there was nothing left for him but to die. And so somehow he pined away, and before the summer was gone, that weary spirit had found rest at last. Cheered by a faith which sustained him in his dying hours, contented to be gone, at peace with mankind and with his own

conscience, Charles Albert died at Oporto on the 28th of July, 1849, breathing with his dying lips a prayer for the country he had loved, if not wisely, yet well.

It was on the very day of Novara that Victor Emmanuel began his reign. Scant time was allowed the young King, on whom a defeat had conferred a crown, for regret or reflection. On the morning following his accession, Victor Emmanuel set out in person for the Austrian camp to negotiate the terms of the armistice with Radetsky. Nothing could have been more painful to his pride of race and character than the act of going as a suppliant to the head-quarters of his victorious enemy, but there was reason to think that Radetsky would prove more conciliatory towards the young King than towards any delegate of his royal authority; and now, as always in every critical moment of his reign, Victor Emmanuel postponed every personal consideration to that of the welfare of Italy. The expectation proved well founded. The fear of a possible French intervention rendered the Austrian Government unwilling to incur the political risks attending an advance on Turin, however advantageous the occupation of the Piedmontese capital might have been from a military point of view. Moreover, Radetsky was personally well disposed towards Victor Emmanuel, who was closely allied by marriage to the

Hapsburg dynasty, and who on the field of battle had given proof of a valour which endeared him to the stout old soldier's heart. After a not very protracted negotiation, the Field Marshal consented to conclude an armistice on the spot, on condition that the King pledged himself on his personal honour to make a treaty of peace without any unnecessary delay, to disband the foreign legions, which were composed, in the main, of Austrian subjects, to reduce the Sardinian army to a peace footing, and to hand over the fortress of Alexandria and the surrounding district to the Austrians, to be occupied by them as a material guarantee until the formal conclusion of peace. The terms were onerous enough, but yet they involved no breach of faith either at home or abroad, and the King had no choice except to consent.

It is only in human nature that the conditions of peace should have been viewed with extreme disfavour at Turin. The completeness of the military disaster at Novara could not easily be realised by the outside public. When once the dread of an Austrian occupation was removed, people began to cry out that the danger had been overrated, and had been averted at too high a price. Better terms, it was said, could easily have been obtained if the game had not been thrown up so hastily, and if the King had stood out longer against the demands of Austria.

He was known to have been unfavourable from the outset to the idea of the second campaign, and—as was almost inevitable under such conditions—he was accused of having sacrificed the interests of his country to personal ambition. So bitter for the moment was the popular feeling against Victor Emmanuel, that he was obliged to return to Turin by night in order to avoid public insults in the streets; and it was under cover of the darkness that he entered his own capital for the first time as King.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE KING'S ACCESSION.

ON the battle-field of Novara the first step was taken in the path which was destined in the end to lead Italy to independence, yet at no period were the prospects of the National cause seemingly more hopeless. In Sicily, the Royal troops had carried the day; at Naples, the Constitution, though not yet formally discarded, was practically suppressed. The Pope, from his refuge at Gaëta, was already soliciting foreign aid to restore him to his throne. The French Republic had determined to despatch an expedition to the Papal States in order to protect the interests of the Catholic Church. The Austrian troops were about to invade the Romagna and Tuscany, with the consent of their legitimate rulers. The Sardinian fleet had been withdrawn from Venice, and the gallant resistance of the Venetians was fast drawing to a close. Meanwhile, the European Powers were either indifferent or actively hostile to the cause of Italy. The reaction which ensued

throughout the Continent upon the collapse of the revolutionary outbreak was inimical to the political principles for which Sardinia had contended. The Austrians, who were now in possession of the stronghold of Alexandria, were in a position to occupy Turin whenever they thought fit. In Lombardy, and indeed in the Peninsula generally, Piedmont, by her acquiescence in defeat, was deemed to have forfeited all claim to the championship of Italy. At Genoa, the news of the disaster of Novara had stirred up the latent disaffection which had survived the annexation of the territory of the Republic; and the result was a popular outbreak, with the avowed object of severing the union between the Genoese State and the kingdom of Sardinia. Indeed, almost the first act of Victor Emmanuel's reign was to despatch an army to the Ligurian seaport to crush an insurrection within his own dominions. No position could well have been more difficult than that of the young King. On the one hand, any overt manifestation of sympathy for Italy, any distinct avowal that Sardinia still looked upon herself as the protagonist of the Peninsula, would of necessity have entailed an Austrian occupation; on the other hand, it was essential to the possibility of any future vindication of the National cause that the conviction should be kept alive that Sardinia had not abandoned the task she had undertaken. To accomplish this—to give

no umbrage to Austria, and yet to retain the adhesion of Italy—was an enterprise which Victor Emmanuel could only hope to carry out with success if he was sustained by the full confidence and loyal trust of his people. Yet, at the outset, he enjoyed neither trust nor confidence.

As I have already remarked, the popular voice held the King responsible for the disastrous ending of the campaign. It was said that he had throughout been hostile at heart to any resumption of hostilities; that he was biassed by his matrimonial relations in favour of Austria; and that, to serve his personal ends, he consented to terms of peace which his father had deemed so fatal that he had abdicated sooner than accept them. On the day following his return to Turin, Victor Emmanuel issued a proclamation. The name of Italy was not mentioned therein, but his people were called upon to work with him for the salvation of their common country, and to help him "in the consolidation of their constitutional liberties." With the shrewd instinct which never failed him at critical moments, the young King recognised the fact that in the maintenance of the Constitution lay the one card he could play with safety.

In estimating Victor Emmanuel's political capacity, it is only fair to dwell specially upon this period of his career. It was not as at a later date, when he acted under the influence of Count Cavour. He had

now to act for himself; he had no advisers, no precedents to go by, no guide except his own strong good sense and honesty of purpose. To free Italy from foreign rule was now, as always, the dominant object of his policy. This object could only be effected if Italy consented to merge her fortunes in those of Piedmont. But Italy would never consent to this, unless her incorporation with Piedmont guaranteed her the possession of constitutional liberty. In order, therefore, to free Italy, it was essential that the Government of Piedmont should be conducted on genuine constitutional principles. Such, I conceive, was the chain of reasoning which led the King to resolve on being above all things a constitutional sovereign. No doubt his respect for his own and his father's promises, his honest pride in being called—in distinction to all the Sovereigns of the Peninsula—the *Re gallant'uomo*, the King who was a man of his word, weighed a good deal in determining Victor Emmanuel's unswerving allegiance to the Constitution. Still, if my estimate of his character is correct, he would, if need had been, have sacrificed the Constitution, as he sacrificed many other things far dearer to him at heart, to promote the cause of Italian independence. Just as Henry IV. of France, to whom Victor Emmanuel bore in many respects no small resemblance, held that *Paris vaut bien une messe*, so the King of Sardinia would not have

allowed any constitutional theories to stand in the way of his securing Rome as the capital of an United Italy. It is no disparagement of his claim to Italian gratitude to say that he valued Parliamentary institutions as a means rather than as an end. If a man is honest, it detracts nothing from his merits to say he had the wit to see that honesty is the best policy.

On the evening after his proclamation had appeared, the King instructed S. Pinelli—who had accepted the Ministry of the Interior in the new Cabinet of which S. Delaunay was to be the Premier—to make known to the Assembly the terms of the armistice just concluded with Radetsky. The announcement of the conditions agreed upon was received by the Chambers with the most violent indignation. The cry of treachery was raised, and a deputation was appointed to wait upon the King, and to remonstrate with his Majesty against the conclusion of peace upon terms so ruinous to the country. The King, who realised only too well the dangers to which the State was exposed by any delay in the formal acceptance of the Austrian conditions, was affected to tears by the opposition of the Chambers, and by the charge of perfidy which was more than insinuated against him. He received the deputation in person, and though the delegates were the representatives of the war party in the Chambers, they were much impressed by the manifest sincerity of his explanations. Still,

notwithstanding the fact that the King seized an early occasion to take his oath to the Constitution, and to repeat orally the assurances he had given in his proclamation, the Chambers would not listen to the idea of peace. In this, the first Parliament of Piedmont, the deputies belonged, as a rule, to the advanced section of the Nationalist party. They were Italians rather than Sardinians, and had little sympathy with the personal ties of hereditary affection which rendered the influence of the reigning dynasty supreme in Piedmont. Elected as they had been in the heyday of the National triumph, they could not brook the thought of acknowledging defeat.

Under these circumstances, if the Government was to be carried on in accordance with constitutional principles, the one course open was an appeal to the country from the decision of the Chambers. This course was adopted, and before a week had elapsed from the defeat of Novara, the Parliament which had decreed the annexation of Lombardy, Venetia, Parma, and Modena to the Kingdom of Sardinia, and which had recorded the assumption by Charles Albert of the title of King of Italy, was at an end.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NEW PARLIAMENT.

THE main object of the Government was now to secure the return of a new Legislature prepared to accept the peace arranged with Radetsky as an accomplished fact. It was with a view to this end that the King composed his first Ministry. The Premiership was assigned to S. Delaunay, a Savoyard gentleman of high character. Already the inevitable divergence of ideas and interests which existed between the trans-Alpine and the sub-Alpine provinces of the Sardinian kingdom had begun to make itself manifest. The Savoyards entertained a deep sentiment of personal attachment towards the House of Savoy, which rendered them, both in camp and council, the most zealous and the most loyal of the adherents of the dynasty. They were ready to stand by the King in his attempt to add new provinces to his kingdom in the Peninsula, just as they would have stood by him if he had sought to aggrandise his

territories at the cost of the Swiss Cantons. But at heart they had little or no sympathy with the Italian cause. Instinct forewarned them, as the event proved, that if ever Sardinia became identical with Italy, the interests of Savoy would infallibly be subordinated to those of the Peninsula. In Savoy, too, where the priests were all-powerful, where there was little intellectual activity, and where the frugal, hardy mountaineers had enough to think about in their daily struggle for bare existence, new ideas penetrated very slowly, and the great mass of the peasant population were absolutely indifferent, if not actively hostile, to any change in the old order of things. S. Delaunay, in common with the majority of his countrymen, had been opposed to the introduction of the *Statuto* by Charles Albert, and had also publicly deprecated the war. Thus his appointment to the Premiership was a guarantee to Austria that Sardinia was prepared to adhere to the terms of her bargain, and it was even believed at the time, though without foundation, that the selection of the Prime Minister had been dictated to the King by Radetsky himself.

In proportion, however, as the appointment of S. Delaunay gave satisfaction to the Austrians, it was distasteful to the Italians. In order to counteract the unfavourable impression necessarily created by the antecedents of the Premier, the King insisted on

the Abbé Gioberti being included in the Ministry. Gioberti belonged to a class of idealists more common north of the Alps than in the more matter-of-fact south, who, being at once devout Catholics and sincere Liberals, are carried away by the notion that the Church is by right the champion of liberty. His work on the "Primacy of the Papacy," which appeared in 1843, and in which he advocated a crusade for the establishment of Italian Independence under the auspices of the Vatican, had produced an immense effect at the time of its publication, and had inspired Pius IX. with his short-lived passion for liberty. In common with most dreamers, Gioberti was unable to realise the fact that his vision was a delusion only, and, notwithstanding the Pope's flight to Gaëta, he still cherished the belief that the emancipation of Italy must be effected by the aid of the Holy See. During the months which had elapsed between the conclusion of the first armistice and the recommencement of hostilities, Gioberti's restless brain had given birth to a new conception. When the Sardinian armies retired in discomfiture from Lombardy, he proposed that they should invade Tuscany in order to insist upon the establishment of constitutional government at Florence. The occupation of Tuscany was to be conducted in the name of the Pope, and its moral effect would be, as he conceived, to rally Catholic Europe to the support of

Italian independence. A more impracticable proposal was never made out of Bedlam. But the time was one when the wildest ideas met with a ready acceptance, and Gioberti found people to believe in his panacea for the solution of the Italian difficulty. He failed, however, to convince his colleagues, and in consequence resigned his seat in the Ministry. After his resignation, though he remained an ardent advocate of the National cause, he opposed the renewal of the war with Austria on the plea that the Sardinian armies ought to be employed on the banks of the Arno, and not on those of the Po. The peculiar attitude which Gioberti had thus taken up rendered his support valuable to Victor Emmanuel at the critical period which followed the disaster of Novara. Nobody had less faith than the King in what I may call professorial politics. But Gioberti, having been an opponent of the war, was less obnoxious to Austria than most of his colleagues; while, on the other hand, his known attachment to the cause of Italian independence rendered his presence in the new Ministry a guarantee to the Italian people that the King had no intention of abandoning the mission he had received from his father.

The fortune of war having been tried and found wanting, the Government of Turin had resort to diplomacy. Gioberti was sent to Paris, at his own suggestion, to persuade the French Republic to inter-

vene on behalf of Italy. The mission proved a failure. Prince Louis Napoleon, indeed, who had just been elected to the Presidency, expressed great sympathy for the Italian cause, but the Assembly, which was daily growing more Conservative in its views, would not hear of any proposal to assist Piedmont. M. Thiers, whose influence was then supreme, described Gioberti as "that idiot of an Abbé," and openly ridiculed the notion of France exerting herself to secure the liberation of the Peninsula. The expedition to Rome had been already agreed upon; and the Republic, as represented by the Assembly, was determined to use the power of France in favour of the Holy See. A forlorn attempt was made at Gaëta by Count Balbo, one of the ablest and most upright of Sardinian statesmen, to induce Pius IX. to forego the prospect of being replaced on his throne by foreign bayonets; but the attempt proved futile. The Pope had lost all his bygone sympathy for the popular cause, and was only too willing to secure his restoration to the Vatican by the aid of an Austrian occupation of the Romagna, and of a French siege of Rome. The King of Naples and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who had also taken refuge at Gaëta, hailed with delight the disasters which had befallen Sardinia, and their influence was actively exerted to sustain the Pope in his resolution to throw himself into the arms

of Austria. No help, it became clear, could be looked for by Sardinia from abroad, and the Government of Victor Emmanuel soon came to the conclusion that the sole chance of mitigating the disastrous consequences of the late defeat lay in its own firmness of purpose and shrewdness of counsel.

Meanwhile, at home, troubles followed each other in hot succession. The insurrection at Genoa had been suppressed without difficulty, and with very little bloodshed, but the passions which the Genoese revolt and its overthrow had excited created additional difficulties in the way of the conclusion of peace. S. Delaunay was forced to resign his post as Prime Minister, owing, in the main, to the unpopularity attaching to his Savoyard proclivities. Massimo D'Azeglio, better known to history as the author of the *Promessi Sposi* than as a politician, then accepted, at the King's personal request, the ungrateful task of forming an Administration. The trial by court-martial of General Ramorino, who had disobeyed orders on the field of battle, his conviction, and his subsequent execution, stirred up throughout Piedmont an amount of political animosity similar to that occasioned at other times and in other countries by the trials of Admiral Byng and Marshal Ney. The King himself had also been attacked by the first of the violent accesses of fever to which he was subject throughout his life, and which in the end

caused his death, and for many days it had seemed certain that to all the other difficulties of the situation in Sardinia there would be added that of a protracted Regency. All this time the Austrian commanders kept pressing for an immediate settlement, and gave the King's Government to understand that, if the treaty was not formally ratified at once, they would be compelled to demand more onerous terms under threat of war.

But to the mass of the population the absolute imperative necessity of peace had not yet made itself clearly manifest. The party which bore the name of *Giovane Italia,* and which followed Mazzini's guidance, had still the ear of the public. The march of events outside the frontiers of Piedmont was calculated to exacerbate the resentment occasioned amidst the people by the sudden downfall of their hopes. At Venice the Austrians were fast gaining ground, but the Queen of the Adriatic still maintained a gallant struggle against her assailants. In Lombardy, and in the provinces of Central Italy occupied by the Austrians, martial law had been proclaimed, and the free institutions to which the revolution had given birth had been suppressed with an iron hand. Spanish regiments had been landed on Italian soil, with the view of restoring the Pope, and had been defeated by the Garibaldian levies. The French, at the solicitation of Pius IX.,

had sent an expedition to Civita Vecchia, and had proceeded to besiege and bombard Rome, the city which the Italians regarded with an almost superstitious reverence. The siege made but slow progress, mainly, it is true, on account of the extreme reluctance of the French commanders to resort to force. Still, the fact remained that the Roman Republic, under the triumvirate of Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Saffi, had kept the armies of France outside the Eternal City for more than three months, and the magnitude of this resistance was exaggerated by national vanity till it assumed, in popular imagination, the proportions of an heroic achievement. The grandeur attributed to the prolonged defence of Rome and Venice under the Republic, was contrasted with the summary collapse of Sardinia under a Monarchy; and the cry was raised, partly in good faith, partly out of political animosity, that the fortunes of the war might have been different if the Court of Turin had consented to carry on the struggle longer, and had thought less of the interests of the dynasty. All these various causes contributed to alienate from the Sardinian Government the support of popular enthusiasm. Piedmont, moreover, was inexperienced in parliamentary life, and the great mass of the electors, having little heart in the matter, stayed away from the polls. The war party, on the other hand, exerted all their energies, and the

result was that at the elections, which were held early in July, a Parliament was returned, the majority of whose members stood pledged to oppose the conclusion of peace, and to thwart the policy of the Government.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MONCALIERI MANIFESTO.

ON the 30th of July, 1849, the second Parliament met in due form. Within a week the formal treaty of peace was signed at Milan by the representatives of Austria and Sardinia. By this treaty the war indemnity was reduced to £3,000,000, the immediate evacuation of Alexandria was secured, and the *status quo ante bellum* was re-established as regarded the territorial possessions of both Powers. Considering the utter prostration of the defeated State, the terms were not unduly onerous. The treaty was ratified at Turin upon the 12th of August by the King's Government, and the one thing required to terminate this state of things, whose prolongation was ruinous to the country, was the formal approval of the convention by the Chambers. The Austrian Government, it is true, attached little value to this formality, and would have rejoiced at seeing Victor Emmanuel induced or compelled to dispense with the approval of Parliament, and thereby led to violate

the Constitution. During the peace negotiations at Milan, Radetsky more than once requested the Sardinian Plenipotentiaries to remind their Sovereign that Austria had always 40,000 bayonets at his service. If things were to come to such a pass that Victor Emmanuel had to choose between the occupation of his kingdom and the violation of the Constitution, the Austrians might reasonably expect that the King would prefer the latter alternative. As it happened, however, Victor Emmanuel was restrained from resorting to any violent means of escape from the difficulties occasioned by the opposition of the Parliament by two very potent considerations. The first was a sort of stubborn obstinacy and respect for his plighted word; the second was a conviction that it was only as a Constitutional Sovereign that he could ever hope to become King of Italy. Still, if the Parliament had persisted in refusing to sanction the treaty of peace, it is difficult to see how the King could have ultimately avoided the necessity of a *coup d'état.* Fortunately, the contingency to which I allude never arose, but it was very near arising.

The newly-elected Chambers, as I have said, looked upon the treaty with extreme suspicion and dislike. Their first act was to elect the Marquis Pareto. This nobleman had held office in one of the short-lived Ministries which had succeeded each other

during the Lombard campaign, and had been a violent partizan of the war *à outrance*. When the insurrection broke out at Genoa, Pareto took sides with the insurgents. For this offence he was tried after the suppression of the revolt, found guilty, and sentenced to death. The sentence, however, was remitted by Victor Emmanuel, on the ground that he could never consent to the execution of a man who had been his father's Minister. It was this pardoned rebel whom the Chambers elected as their President. The full significance of their choice was hardly understood by the Deputies themselves; but the King regarded Pareto's appointment as a personal outrage, while abroad it was looked upon as a proof that a rupture between the Crown and the Parliament in Sardinia was unavoidable.

Notwithstanding, however, the hostile attitude of the Chambers, the King, deeply as he regretted and resented their action, declined to take any step which was inconsistent with the Constitution. Negotiations were instituted between the Ministry and the leaders of the majority, with the view of averting any open rejection of the treaty, such as might furnish Austria with an excuse for intervention. These negotiations went on for weeks without coming to any definite result, and the situation grew daily more and more critical. Yet during this period, when the violence of the Mazzinian party was doing everything that could

be done to alienate Victor Emmanuel from the National cause, he never lost sight of the object he had in view. That object was, while accepting the logic of facts, to keep alive amidst the Italians the belief that in Sardinia lay the hope for Italy. While the opposition of the Chambers was at its height, General Pepé, who had held the chief command in the defence of Venice against the Austrians, passed through Turin on his way back to Paris, where, close upon thirty years before, he had taken up his abode as an exile. The King at once sent for the veteran patriot, to explain to him the circumstances under which he had been compelled to recall the Sardinian war-vessels from the Adriatic. General Pepé was much impressed by the frankness with which Victor Emmanuel dwelt upon the considerations which had dictated his policy in concluding peace, and by his assertions of his unimpaired loyalty to the cause of Italy. When taking leave, the General recommended the King to set before himself the example of Leopold of Belgium as that of a model Constitutional Sovereign. "General," was the proud answer, "if I require worthy examples of loyalty and good sense, I have no need to look beyond my own family; I know the history of my forefathers, and that suffices."

In accordance with the same considerations which had dictated his reception of General Pepé, the King, about this time, seized the opportunity of a vacancy

in the Ministry of War to appoint, as successor of the late Minister, S. Paleocapa, a distinguished Venetian exile, who, after the fall of his native city, had sought and found a refuge in Piedmont. These two acts were intended to show, and were successful in showing, that Sardinia, however much she might desire peace for the moment, still regarded herself as the champion of Italy.

Meanwhile, the Chambers hesitated to ratify the treaty of peace. At last, after a protracted debate, an amendment was carried deferring the ratification of the treaty till a preliminary agreement had been come to between the Austrian and Sardinian Governments as to the status of the Lombardo-Venetian exiles who had taken service under Piedmont. The amendment was not intended to be hostile to the Government, and originated in a generous desire on the part of the Chambers to secure immunity for men whose sole offence was that they had fought under the flag of Savoy. But the introduction of this stipulation could only be justified, practically, on the assumption that Austria was prepared to submit to new conditions in order to secure the ratification of the treaty. This assumption the King and his Ministers knew to be radically erroneous. The Austrians cared little about the immediate conclusion of peace, and were ready to seize any pretext for completing their only half-

accomplished victory. For the Sardinian Parliament, therefore, to insist upon new conditions, however equitable in themselves as essential to the ratification of the treaty, was to imperil all the fruits of the policy by which the occupation of Piedmont, and the forcible overthrow of the Constitution, had been so far averted. The King felt deeply the want of confidence displayed by the Chambers. The amendment of which I write was carried on the 16th November, 1849. On the day following, the Parliament was dissolved, and on the 20th, Victor Emmanuel issued, in his own name, from his Palace of Moncalieri, an address to the electors. In language of singular dignity and simplicity, he told his people that they had failed in their duty at the last elections by returning a Chamber resolved not to work with him, but against him; that the immediate confirmation of the treaty of peace concluded with Austria was essential to the honour and safety of the country; that he was resolved, come what may, to remain faithful to his plighted faith; but that, if they wished his efforts to be crowned with success, they must, at this crisis of the nation's fate, elect a Parliament prepared to support the Government. The manifesto ended with these words:—"Never till the present day has the House of Savoy appealed in vain to the loyalty, the good sense, and the affection of its subjects; I have therefore the right to trust in my

people at the present moment, and to feel assured that, united one with the other, we shall be able to uphold the Constitution, and to preserve the country from the dangers which threaten us."

The appeal was not made in vain. The words of the Moncalieri proclamation struck home to the heart of the nation. The electors flocked in crowds to the polls, and returned to the Chambers an overwhelming majority pledged to support the King's Government. The manifesto was the production of Victor Emmanuel himself, and the outspoken frankness of its language sufficed, as Count Cavour acknowledged at a later period, to save the country from a very grave and a very real danger.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SICCARDI LAWS.

IN S. Massari's interesting memoir of Victor Emmanuel—a work to which I, in common with all writers on the subject, am deeply indebted—the author relates how, very shortly after the issue of the Moncalieri manifesto, he had an interview with the young King of Sardinia. Massari, a Neapolitan by birth, and an exile from his native land on account of his Liberal opinions, had written a work which attracted considerable attention at the time, reciting the wrongs which he and his fellow-countrymen had sustained at the hands of the Government of the Two Sicilies. A copy of this work had been presented by Massari to Victor Emmanuel, and in due course he was summoned to the palace to have an audience with his Majesty. With characteristic frankness, the King informed the author that he had not read his book, and did not expect to have time to read it, but that he knew its purport perfectly, and sympathised with

the opinions therein expressed. "I am grieved," the King concluded, "that your country should suffer so much, and I understand your grief and your resentment; but you must have patience. Do not be discouraged; I am persuaded that the day will come when you and your fellow-countrymen will be satisfied. My one desire is to see all Italians happy, but for the present I must occupy myself with my work here."

These words represent faithfully the policy that Victor Emmanuel had set before himself. At this critical period of his career, when he still relied, mainly, if not exclusively, upon his own unassisted judgment, he had realised the truth that, under the existing conditions of the Continent, the only way in which he could promote the cause of Italian independence was by making Piedmont the model of a constitutional kingdom, in which all other considerations were subordinated to the welfare of the community. It was not enough for this purpose to provide Piedmont with Parliamentary institutions. It was essential to prove to the world at large, and to Italy in particular, that these institutions enabled the Piedmontese to carry out their own ideas, and to administer their own affairs after their own fashion. The *Statuto* had been proclaimed in haste, and had been followed by a long period of war. Now, however, that peace had been restored, the new Constitu-

tion had to justify its existence by inaugurating social as well as political reforms.

One of the chief abuses under which Piedmont suffered lay in the immunity enjoyed by the clergy in respect of the law. In Sardinia, even more than in almost any other portion of the Peninsula, the Church still enjoyed the exceptional privileges which she had acquired during the middle ages. The civil power had, in fact, no legal jurisdiction over the clergy. All offences committed by ecclesiastics were tried by clerical tribunals, acting upon the canon law, and irresponsible to the State. Moreover, these courts claimed, and to some extent exercised, jurisdiction over laymen accused of heresy, blasphemy, sacrilege, and other offences against the Church. If the legislation of Piedmont was to be brought into harmony with modern ideas, the suppression of the so-called *Foro Ecclesiastico* had become an absolute necessity. The reform in question was urgently demanded, not only by popular opinion, but by all the statesmen who had taken the lead in the constitutional movement. In well-nigh every other Catholic country the Vatican had acquiesced in the suppression of the legal immunities enjoyed by the clergy, and it was not unreasonable for the Court of Turin to expect that the Holy See would concede to Sardinia what it had already conceded to France, Austria, Spain, and Portugal. The overtures, how-

ever, which were made to the Vatican by S. Siccardi, the Minister of Justice, met with a point-blank refusal; and the Sardinian Government was given clearly to understand that any attempt to curtail the jurisdiction of the Church would entail the risk of an open rupture with the Holy See. The prospect of such a rupture was, personally, most distasteful to the King himself. Though he had little of the religious fervour of his father, Victor Emmanuel had inherited a sort of half-sentimental, half-superstitious devotion to the Church, which was characteristic of all his race. Though his life was never that of a devout believer, he had always a strange kind of belief in the teaching of the Church, and it was thought, by those who knew him well, that at more than one period of his career he seriously entertained the idea of abdicating, and finishing his days in a convent. I do not know whether I can better express his state of mind upon religious matters, than by saying that, though he was always, by force of circumstances, in warfare with the Church, he was never quite certain in his own mind whether what the Church taught might not be true after all. This sort of spiritual doubt, intelligible enough in a man of strong animal temperament, and very little inclined to abstract speculation of any kind, rendered him naturally averse to any course of action which might entail upon him the spiritual penalties which the

Church declared to be the fate of all who disobeyed her injunctions. Moreover, the personal influence of his mother and his wife, both of whom were devout Catholics, told very strongly upon the King. If he could have avoided offending the Church without endangering the cause to which his life was devoted, he would never have sanctioned the suppression of the Ecclesiastical Tribunals out of deference to abstract ideas of policy. As a matter of fact, however, he became convinced that he could not be the leader of the National Italian movement unless he gave Sardinia the civil liberties enjoyed by other constitutional countries. A Bill was brought in—which is commonly known under the name of the *Legge Siccardi*—by which the clergy were placed under the authority of the Civil Courts, and was passed with large majorities by both Houses of Parliament. When the King signed the Bill, he said to Siccardi, half in jest and half in earnest, "Remember that you, and you alone, are responsible for this; and if this law is to send its authors to hell, it is you alone who will have to go there."

The enactment of this measure excited the most violent opposition on the part of the Vatican and the Sardinian clergy. Shortly after the Bill had become law, one of the Ministry, the Cavaliere di Santarosa, was seized with a mortal illness. The parish priest, acting under the instructions of the Bishop, refused

to administer the sacrament to the dying Minister, on the ground of his participation in the mortal offence committed against the Church. In consequence, Santarosa, who was himself a devout Catholic, was allowed to die without absolution. Looking at the question from a philosophical point of view, it is not very easy to see why, if absolution at the hands of a priest has any real efficacy, the priest should be compelled to give such absolution to a penitent whom, rightly or wrongly, he regards as guilty of a deadly sin. But the philosophical point of view is not one which at that day found much favour with Italians in their attitude towards the Church. The popular sentiment was, that the Church had committed an unwarrantable abuse of power in refusing the sacraments to a dying man, whose only offence was that he had supported a legal reform in opposition to the wishes of the clergy. The Bishop by whom the refusal had been sanctioned was committed to prison, and the rupture between the Church and the Government of Turin became final.

Santarosa's death possesses a collateral importance of far graver consequence than the outburst of popular indignation to which it gave rise, in the fact that it afforded the occasion for the entry into the Ministry of a comparatively unknown politician, who had distinguished himself in the debates on the Siccardi Laws. That politician was Count Camillo

Cavour. When his name was submitted to Victor Emmanuel, he remarked to the Ministers who recommended the appointment, "You take my word for it, your new colleague will turn you all out, and will be Prime Minister himself." The prophecy was speedily fulfilled, and the fact of its being made shows how early the King had realised both the power and the ambition of the great statesman, who was destined to share with Victor Emmanuel the labour and the credit of creating the kingdom of Italy.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PROGRESS OF PIEDMONT.

DURING the two years which ensued after the enactment of the Siccardi Laws, the history of Piedmont had little about it of striking incident. The King never wavered in his double policy of keeping himself before the eyes of Italy as the champion of the National cause, and of enabling Piedmont to realise the full conception of a constitutional state. In order to fulfil the first part of this policy, he had to proceed with extreme caution. The hostility of Austria and of the affiliated Governments of the Peninsula was so intense, that any overt act of sympathy with Italy would have exposed Piedmont to the risk of an armed occupation. Victor Emmanuel, therefore, had to content himself with showing courtesy to all the leading Italian exiles, who either took up their abode at Turin or passed through it on their way westward, and with filling up important posts in the Governments with Italians from other states, who, like Farini, had acquired

reputation in the revolutionary conflicts of the Peninsula. Every act of this kind was visited with severe censure by the representatives of the leading reactionary Powers, and Victor Emmanuel could hardly have withstood the diplomatic pressure brought upon him, if he had not appealed constantly to an argument whose justice his critics could not dispute—namely, the right of a Sovereign of the House of Savoy to act as he thought fit within his own dominions. Curiously enough, the prestige attaching in the eyes of the reigning caste throughout Europe to one of the oldest of Continental dynasties, contributed in no small degree to facilitate the application of democratic principles to the Government of Piedmont.

The second object of the King's policy, the development of Parliamentary institutions, though it possibly gave even greater umbrage to the neighbouring autocratic States, yet afforded less opening for unfriendly and hostile action. So long as things went on quietly at Piedmont—so long as treaties were observed, finances placed in order, and the supreme authority of the throne fully recognised—it was difficult for even the most embittered of the King's enemies to make his constitutional procedure a ground of active complaint. After the catastrophe of 1848, the revolutionary party lost its influence in Sardinia; wiser counsels prevailed; the concessions of

the King were responded to by proportionate moderation in the demands of the people; and Piedmont exhibited the example of a self-ruled country, in which the administration of public affairs was left, with the full consent of the Government, in the hands of men of station and position.

Still it is always easy to find an excuse for arbitrary intervention; and neither the logical strength of the Piedmontese position, nor the moderation with which reforms were carried out, would have sufficed to protect her from interference, had it not been for the altered position of Continental affairs. Already the star of Louis Napoleon was in the ascendant. The French Republic was obviously approaching the end of its short-lived existence, and the tide of popular opinion in France was running strongly in favour of Imperialism as represented by the Prince President. The Prince was believed to have very strong personal sympathies for the cause of Italy; and though many of the forces which acted in his behalf when it came to the overthrow of the Republic were hostile to revolutionary changes of any kind, yet the triumph of Napoleon III. was felt instinctively to be a gain and not a loss to Italy. According to a story very commonly believed at Turin, Louis Napoleon had been supplied with funds by the Sardinian Government at the crisis of his struggle with the Assembly. Be this as it may, it is certain

that Victor Emmanuel and his Ministers lost no opportunity of manifesting their sympathy for the new *régime* established in France, and an impression very soon got abroad that any attack on the independence of Piedmont might expose the assailant to the hostility of the Second Empire. This impression was in itself a great safeguard to Sardinia during the days while she was still struggling for bare existence, and it is only fair to Victor Emmanuel to say that, though the conception of the alliance with Napoleon III. was developed and carried out by Count Cavour, yet that the first appreciation of the solidarity of interests uniting the cause of Italy with that of the Napoleonic dynasty was due to the initiative of the King himself.

Meanwhile, the work of reorganising the institutions of Piedmont in accordance with constitutional ideas went on steadily and regularly. A law was passed regulating freedom of the Press, and a second step was taken towards emancipating the State from the control of the Church by the establishment of civil marriages. The King himself viewed this measure with even more hesitation than the abolition of the ecclesiastical tribunals. On more than one occasion, he objected to the arguments submitted to him in favour of the proposed reform, on the ground that, though they might be unanswerable legally, they took no account of the religious considerations

which he, as King, was bound to bear in mind. He was sustained in his resolution to carry out the reform in question, far less by any conviction of its inherent expediency than by the counsels of the Archbishop of Genoa, Monsignor Charvaz, a native of Savoy, who was attached to the dynasty with the personal loyalty of his race, and who assured his old pupil that he might fulfil his duty as a constitutional king without incurring the wrath of Heaven. Moreover, the success with which his policy had been attended, seemed to Victor Emmanuel a convincing argument that it could not be displeasing to the higher Powers. The belief that Providence was on his side exercised throughout his life an extraordinary influence on a mind such as Victor Emmanuel's, and the frequent allusions to the manifest favour of Heaven, which are to be found in most of the royal addresses issued by Victor Emmanuel, were far more in accordance with the personal sentiments of the King than with the sceptical tone of thought which found favour with most of his Ministers.

It should be cited, to the credit of Victor Emmanuel's good sense and judgment, that, at this critical period of his career, he recognised the necessity of being a constitutional sovereign in fact as well as in name, even when, by so doing, he ran counter to his own personal preferences and wishes. Very few constitutional rulers have ever adhered so

faithfully to the principle that the choice of ministers is a question to be decided by Parliament alone, and that it is for a minister and not for a sovereign to determine upon what elements the minister shall rely to obtain a majority. The temptation to Victor Emmanuel, with his strong personal likes and dislikes, and with his clear conception of the objects he had in view, must have been very great indeed to insist upon selecting the instruments by which the work of government was to be done. Nothing would have been easier for him than to have exerted his personal influence so as to have practically dictated the choice of the Parliament. He perceived, however, that by any interference of this kind he would deprive his Parliament of its real strength, and it was necessary for his purpose that the Parliament should be a power in the land.

Very soon after Count Cavour's accession to office he began to separate himself from the Conservative party, of which the Prime Minister, D'Azeglio, was the chief, and to form a coalition with the Left, who represented the party of action. At last matters came to a crisis, and the Ministry broke up. All the King's sympathies were in favour of D'Azeglio, to whom he was personally attached, while he resented keenly the way in which both he and his father had been attacked by the Left during the late campaign and the ensuing negotiations for peace. His instinct,

however, showed him that the real political power resided with Cavour and his adherents; and in 1852 Count Cavour, with the full approval of the King, became the President of the Council. Previous to his accession to office, the new President paid a visit to Paris, where he had been in close relations with the Emperor of the French.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WESTERN ALLIANCE.

CAVOUR had not been long in office before questions arose which gave full scope for the exercise of his diplomatic ability. Early in 1853, the Mazzinian party made an abortive rising in Lombardy. No event could have been less in accordance with the wishes of the Sardinian Government. The great object of their policy at that period was to prove to the world, or at any rate to lead the world to believe, that the constitutional movement in Piedmont had no connection with any revolutionary designs against the peace of Europe, or with any scheme for the overthrow of the established order of things in the Peninsula. On the other hand, it was the policy of Austria to encourage the belief that the establishment of constitutional government in Piedmont endangered the tranquillity of the other Italian States, and thereby endangered the peace of Europe. On this as on many other occasions, both before and after, Mazzini and his followers, however unintentionally, played the

game of Austria; and if the Government of Vienna had been wise enough to make this unsuccessful and insane insurrection a plea for demanding fresh guarantees on the part of Sardinia, the demand would have been very difficult to resist.

But though the rising was put down at once, the Austrian Government not only initiated reprisals of excessive severity, but adopted a measure for which no justification could be pleaded. A number of Lombard gentlemen of fortune had taken refuge in Piedmont after the campaign of Novara, and had become naturalised subjects of the Sardinian State. No proof was adduced that these exiles had taken any part, directly or indirectly, in the insurrection, but the estates they still held in Lombardy were forthwith confiscated by the Austrian Government. This high-handed measure elicited a strong protest from the Court of Turin, which was responded to by the recall of the Austrian minister, Count Apponyi; and though the rupture of diplomatic relations was not followed up by a declaration of war, owing mainly to the strong disapproval expressed by the Government of France, the attitude adopted by Austria towards Sardinia assumed an almost bellicose character. Indeed a conflict would probably have ensued, if the attention of Austria had not been diverted from Italian affairs by the impending outbreak of hostilities in the East of Europe. Russia had already com-

menced the attack on Turkey which culminated in the Crimean war, and it was obvious, even to a less acute statesman than Count Cavour, that sooner or later the Western Powers would be dragged into the conflict. The true history of the relations between the Emperor Napoleon and Count Cavour has never yet been made fully known, and unless either of the two has left records of which the world has as yet no cognisance, the probability is that the exact truth never will be known. There can, however, be no doubt that, in one form or another, Count Cavour had come to an understanding with the Emperor of the French, or that the credit of the policy which eventuated in the despatch of a Sardinian contingent to the Crimea was due to the genius of the Italian minister. When the idea was first submitted to him, it was warmly embraced by Victor Emmanuel. Indeed, had it not been for his staunch adhesion, it could never have been carried out. But though the King embraced the idea with such zeal that he ultimately learnt to regard it as his own conception, it is probable that he was tempted rather by the military aspect of the question, than by the far-seeing political combination of which it formed a part.

Taken by itself alone, the proposal that Sardinia should join France and England in making war upon Russia seemed, on a superficial view, to be absolutely unjustifiable. There were few States in Europe which

had a less direct interest in the settlement of the Eastern question than the kingdom of Piedmont. The force that Sardinia could afford to contribute was necessarily too small a one for her to play any important part in the war. In the case of success, therefore, she could hope to gain but little, while in the event of failure she would incur the bitter hostility of Russia—a power which, under such a contingency, would necessarily become the leader of the reactionary party throughout the Continent. The expenses of any active participation in the Crimean campaign must of necessity be very large, while the finances of the State, exhausted as they were by the late war, seemed imperatively to demand the strictest economy. In fact, the alliance with the Western Powers, as suggested by Cavour, bore the aspect of a Quixotic enterprise. The objections to it were manifold and obvious; the arguments in its favour were not of a nature to be stated in such a way as to command public approval. The King, it is true, favoured the project, but he did so mainly on the ground that the expedition would restore the military reputation of the Sardinian army, and would also relieve him from the reproach of having taken no steps to uphold the rights of his Lombard-born subjects, whose estates had been confiscated by an act of arbitrary violence. As I have said, it is impossible to say how far he was fully cognisant of the ideas

which undoubtedly guided Count Cavour's policy. He possessed a great deal of that Italian astuteness which hides very deep-laid designs under an apparent simplicity and openness of manner; but in all his recorded statements made at this period, there is no indication of his having clearly grasped the master conception, that the main object of the proposed alliance was to enlist French sympathies in favour of an eventual Franco-Italian coalition against Austria, and to disarm the opposition which such a coalition was certain to encounter in England.

The whole conditions of Europe have sustained so fundamental a change within the last quarter of a century, that it is difficult to realise the state of things which made the adhesion of Sardinia in 1854 a matter of real importance both to France and England. In its inception, however, the Anglo-French alliance against Russia was viewed with very great distrust both in France and England, and it was a great object for both Powers to confer an international character upon their resolution to defend Turkey against Russia. The accession of Sardinia to the anti-Russian coalition, though of no great value from a military point of view, would, it was thought, encourage other neutral States to throw in their fortunes with the Western Powers. Moreover, the fortune of the campaign turned—or at any rate seemed to turn—upon the attitude of Austria. For

a long time it remained an open question whether the Government of Vienna would side with Russia or against her, and the fact that Sardinia had entered the Anglo-French alliance bound Austria over to neutrality, unless she was prepared to run the risk of having to fight again for her possessions south of the Alps, under circumstances which would necessarily be far less favourable to her arms than they had been in 1848 and 1849. This being so, Sardinia had it in her power to confer a substantial service upon France and England by joining her forces to theirs, and thereby to establish a claim upon their assistance in future.

Still, although it was clear that the Western Powers would be the gainers by the alliance, the advantage to Sardinia herself seemed problematic, and the proposal encountered the strongest opposition from Cavour's colleagues in the ministry. Their consent to the proposal could only be obtained upon condition that the Western Powers should either guarantee Sardinia against any attack from Austria, or that they should insist upon the revocation of the decree confiscating the estates of the Lombard exiles. These stipulations, however, deprived the adhesion of Sardinia of the advantages which her allies anticipated, and were therefore refused both in London and in Paris. Cavour himself had not the authority which he possessed at a later period. He was

distrusted alike by the Conservative Liberals, by the Clerical party, and by the Mazzinians: indeed his momentary unpopularity was so great, that at one time his house in Turin was almost wrecked by a mob which had collected to make a demonstration against the increased expenditure rendered necessary by his adventurous policy. The King, however, stood firmly by the Minister and by his ideas; and at last, after protracted negotiations—which ended in a ministerial crisis and the resignation of the Minister of War—the treaty of alliance between Sardinia and the Western Powers was signed at Turin. By this treaty Sardinia agreed to send a contingent of 18,000 men to the Crimea at her own cost, and to do so without any promise of reward, or pledge of protection in the future. This treaty formed the keystone of the policy which led to the subsequent overthrow of Austrian dominion throughout the Peninsula. The credit of it is, I think, mainly due to Count Cavour; but he could never have realised his conception had it not been for the staunch and loyal support afforded him by Victor Emmanuel.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CRIMEAN CAMPAIGN.

THE treaty was signed early in January, but it was not till the middle of April that the Sardinian contingent was in a position to start for the Crimea, under the command of General Della Marmora. The King was most anxious to have accompanied the expedition; indeed, at one time there was some talk, with the view of avoiding the jealousies between the English and French generals, that the allied armies in the Crimea should be commanded by Victor Emmanuel himself; but the situation at home was too agitated to permit of the King's absence, even if family reasons had not rendered it a matter of imperative importance to avoid any unnecessary risk to a life so valuable to the cause of Italy. Just at this moment, the royal dynasty was exposed to a series of calamities, of so marked a character as to strengthen the popular belief that they were especial objects of divine displeasure. On the 12th of January the Queen-mother died suddenly, in the fifty-third year of her

age. Within a week the Queen herself died, after a protracted and painful illness; and before another month was past, the King's only brother, the Duke of Genoa—a man hitherto of robust constitution—died of rapid consumption, in the very prime of his life.

Even under ordinary circumstances, these blows would have fallen very heavily upon the King. Whatever his personal failings may have been in other respects, Victor Emmanuel was a man of strong family feeling and affectionate disposition. He had an extreme attachment for his mother, and was painfully aware that her latter days had been embittered by the distress to which her pious soul had been subjected, through the conflict between her son and the Holy See. The Queen herself was dying at the period when the Queen-mother was seized with her last illness. The relations between the wife and mother of Victor Emmanuel had been exceptionally tender, and the King, coming from his mother's deathbed, had to conceal the fact from his dying wife. Nor was it possible but that something of self-reproach should have been added to the grief felt by Victor Emmanuel for the loss of a wife whose affection for him had never wavered, and to whom he had given grave cause of complaint. The King's connection with other women, and especially with the Countess Mirafiore—better known to the Piedmontese by her old name of Rosina—had become notorious after his accession to the throne,

and the Queen was known to have taken greatly to heart her semi-desertion by her husband. Moreover, Victor Emmanuel belonged to that class of men who, though they may inflict pain on those nearest to them by their conduct, shrink with reluctance from seeing the pain inflicted; and the passionate grief expressed by the King for his wife's death was none the less genuine because it was short-lived. But of all the blows sustained by the King at this period, that of his brother was probably the most severe. The two brothers had always been deeply attached to each other. From the days when they had been playfellows, they had shared joy and sorrow together. The younger Prince, though less energetic by disposition than his elder brother, was of a more quiet and thoughtful disposition, and exercised over him the influence justly due, not only to his calm judgment, but to the absolute loyalty of his affection. With the death of the Duke of Genoa the King lost the one friend to whom he could speak on terms of complete equality and implicit confidence, as well as the one counsellor on whose advice he could rely, without the slightest suspicion of its being influenced by any other feeling than a desire for his own welfare and that of the dynasty. No loss comes home so much to men as the death of one somewhat younger than themselves, and with whom all their recollections of the past, and all their hopes of the future, are alike associated.

The necessary conditions of Court life render royal

personages more dependent than ordinary humanity upon the affection of their own kinsfolk; and the result of these three deaths was to create a solitude about Victor Emmanuel singularly painful to a man of his disposition. Then, too, given the vein of religion —or superstition, whichever you like to call it—which characterised the King, it is intelligible that he should have more than half-shared the common prejudice that these calamities had befallen him on account of his offences against the Church. There were not wanting adroit counsellors to hint to him that, if he disregarded these warnings from on high, his own soul would shortly be called to account; and the temptation to make his peace with the Church was one whose potency at this period it would be difficult to over-estimate. That he stood firm to his purpose, and refused from any personal considerations to jeopardise the public work he had undertaken, is a fact that should never be forgotten in any estimate of his character.

At the very moment when the King was depressed by his private sorrows, and by his qualms of conscience, he was called upon to place himself once more in open hostility to the Holy See. The Kingdom of Sardinia was over-burdened with conventual establishments, which owned an immense amount of land, and wielded an influence inconsistent with the well-being of the country. It had long been felt that the suppression, or at any rate the diminution, of these ecclesiastical corporations was urgently

demanded in the interest of moral and material progress; and a Bill for this purpose had been introduced by Count Cavour. In order to avoid any unnecessary offence to religious sentiment, the Bill had been defended by its author, not so much on the real ground that the existence of conventual establishments was an evil to be reduced within narrow limits, as on the plea that the confiscation of the convent lands was essential to the welfare of the Church. The parochial clergy in Sardinia were in many instances miserably underpaid, and it was proposed by the Bill in question to provide a sum of about £4,000,000 sterling by the sale of the estates belonging to convents, and thus to augment the stipends of the parish priests. If proof were needed how much more closely the Liberalism of Italy, as represented by Count Cavour and his school, resembled that of England rather than France, it would be found in the fact that a proposal for the virtual abolition of convents was based, not on any abstract vindication of civil as opposed to clerical rights, but on the practical expediency of improving the status of the regular clergy. The advantage thus acquired, of placing the question on the ground of expediency, not of principle, was counterbalanced by the fact that the logical argument in favour of the reform was open to cavil, and the Church party were shrewd enough to avail themselves of the opportunity. In the course of the debates on the Bill, a high dignitary of the Church

stated, on behalf of the convents, that they were prepared themselves to provide the £4,000,000 required to improve the condition of the parish priests, and that therefore there was no necessity for proceeding with the measure. The proposal was a specious one, and its offer placed the Ministry under the alternative of either withdrawing their Bill, or of acknowledging that their real object was to do away with the conventual system. The King himself was naturally inclined to accept a compromise, which would have fulfilled the avowed object of the reform demanded, and would have spared him the painful necessity of a renewed conflict with the Church. Thereupon Count Cavour and his colleagues tendered their resignation, and the King applied to D'Azeglio, General Durando, and other notabilities of the Constitutional party, to inquire if they could form a Ministry prepared to legislate on the basis of the proposed compromise. One and all, however, of these statesmen declared that the time had come for settling the conventual question, that this question could be best settled by Count Cavour, and that, as a Constitutional Sovereign, the King had no choice except to recall the Ministry which alone possessed the confidence of the Chambers. As soon as this truth was brought home to the King's mind, he resolved to disregard all other considerations except the single one of doing his duty as a Constitutional Sovereign. At this period, speaking to a friend, he used the following remarkable words :

"They tell me that God has wished to punish me —that because I have consented to these laws, He has taken away my mother, my wife, and my brother; they threaten me with still heavier punishments; but they do not seem to understand that a Sovereign who wishes to secure his own happiness in the world to come, is bound first to assure the happiness of his people in this world." After a brief ministerial crisis, Count Cavour was recalled, and the Bill for the suppression of convents passed through both Houses of Parliament, and received the Royal assent.

On the eve of the departure of the Piedmontese contingent, they were reviewed by the King in person, who congratulated General Della Marmora on going to fight the Russians, while he himself was left behind to fight with monks and nuns. The progress of the expedition was watched in Sardinia with the keenest interest. To the King himself the military honour of his troops was probably a matter of at least as deep concern as the political issues involved in the fate of the campaign. It seemed only too likely that the small Sardinian force would have no opportunity of distinguishing itself; and yet, if the expedition ended ingloriously, or tamely, the advantages accruing to Sardinia from participation in the war, would have been more than counterbalanced by the heavy cost it would entail upon the impoverished finances of the country. Happily the Sardinian troops were able to win an independent success at the battle of the Tchernaya. Subsequent events have tended to dim

the whole credit of the Crimean campaign, and it may reasonably be doubted now whether the victory of the Tchernaya had any very decisive effect upon the course of the war; but at the time it was regarded as a brilliant military achievement. However this may have been, the effect upon public opinion in Europe, and especially in the Peninsula, was as great as the authors of the expedition could possibly have desired. For the first time for centuries, an Italian army, fighting under its own colours, had won an important victory in a foreign war. From a small and almost unknown state, Sardinia had thus suddenly risen into the position of an important Power, playing a leading part in the settlement of European questions; and her claim to represent Italy abroad, as well as at home, was no longer open to dispute. The cost of the campaign to Sardinia was cheaply purchased in return for the influence and authority she had secured thereby. The world instinctively felt that this appearance of Sardinia as a combatant and victorious power, in alliance with France and England, must of necessity be the prelude to far greater impending changes; while the reputation of Count Cavour became at once that of a statesman who could not only conceive great ideas, but was also prepared to face the cost by which alone great ideas can be carried into execution.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CONGRESS OF PARIS.

THE net result of the part played by Sardinia in the Crimean campaign, subordinate though it may have been in its effect on the military issue of the conflict, was to raise the kingdom of Piedmont in the public opinion of Europe. Indeed, looking back upon the past, it may fairly be said that out of that unsatisfactory campaign no Power derived so great a profit as the least influential member of the Triple Alliance. The increased authority accruing to the State ruled over by Victor Emmanuel, was indicated in the course of the next few months by the visits which the Court of Turin received at this period. The King of Portugal, the Duke of Brabant, and the Dowager Empress of Russia were amongst the royal guests entertained at this period by the King. It would be a mistake to suppose that Victor Emmanuel was indifferent to these testimonies of royal favour. No sovereign was probably ever more averse by disposition to State ceremonials, but still Victor Emmanuel had throughout his life the instincts of

royalty, and was keenly alive to the value of the recognition involved in the presence at his Court of members of the reigning European dynasties. The saying attributed to the Emperor Joseph of Austria, "*C'est mon metier d'être roi*," might have been repeated with perfect truth by the King of Sardinia. He never forgot that he was not only the champion of Italian independence, but the representative of one of the oldest of European monarchies. For himself he had but little of personal ambition, but in the ambition to uphold the importance of his royal house he yielded to none of his many predecessors on the throne of Savoy. The increased prestige attaching to the Sardinian monarchy furnished the occasion for the display of independence, which a year or two before could not have been indulged in without endangering the risk of an armed intervention. About this time, a Lombard gentleman, who had taken part in the Milanese rising, and had subsequently sought refuge in Piedmont, was appointed an *attaché* to the Sardinian Embassy in Tuscany. The appointment was objected to by Count Buol, the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Thereupon Count Cavour, acting under the advice of Victor Emmanuel, protested against the assumption that Austria had any right of interference in the relations between Tuscany and Piedmont. This view was supported by the French Government, and Count Buol withdrew his objection. The mere fact, however, that the Court of Turin had

ventured to withstand the will of Austria, showed clearly that with the Crimean campaign the attitude of Sardinia towards Austria had undergone a fundamental change.

In the course of the summer of 1855, Victor Emmanuel sustained another of the violent attacks of fever which finally brought his life to a close Upon his recovery, he made a journey to France and England, accompanied by Count Cavour. In Paris he was received with singular warmth, and was treated with an amount of cordiality by the Emperor Napoleon which gave considerable umbrage to the Austrian Government. In England his reception, though cordial, had not the especial significance attached to his welcome in Paris. As an ally in the Crimea, and as the sovereign of a constitutional State, he was treated with the courtesy due to his position; but personally he was less acceptable at Buckingham Palace than he had been at the Tuileries. I have reason to believe that, either during or after his visit, he offered his hand in marriage to the Princess Mary of Cambridge. Religious objections would alone have sufficed at that period to render impossible a marriage between a Catholic Prince and a member of the English Royal Family. The proposed match, however, did not find favour with the Court of St. James's, and both the King and his Prime Minister returned with the conviction that, if Sardinia was to look for active help from either of its two allies, the hopes of such

assistance must be directed to Paris rather than London.

With the capture of Sebastopol the Crimean war had entered on a new and, as it proved, a final stage. It was obvious that, if Russia declined to acknowledge her defeat in the Crimea as decisive, pressure from another quarter must be brought to bear upon the Muscovite Empire. At the moment, however, when the Allied Powers were contemplating operations in conjunction with Sweden on a far more extensive basis, the Emperor Alexander announced his desire to terminate the war. For different reasons the conclusion of peace was desired both in Paris and London, and especially in the former capital. Sardinia, which had looked to find her ultimate reward in the later development of the war, viewed with disapproval this sudden cessation of hostilities; but she had no choice except to submit to the decision of her allies; and, early in 1856, a Congress was held in Paris for the settlement of the terms of peace between Russia and the Western Powers. At this Congress, Sardinía was represented as a matter of right by Count Cavour. With the connivance of the French Government, Count Cavour seized the opportunity of the Congress to advocate the necessity of settling the Italian question in the interests of European peace. To quote the words employed by Victor Emmanuel in addressing the Parliament of Turin after the conclusion of peace, "For the first time the interests of Italy were defended in an European contest

by an Italian Power, and the necessity of improving the position of Italy was vindicated on behalf of the common well-being of the European community." A less adroit or less courageous Minister than Count Cavour would not have taken advantage of the Congress of Paris to represent Austria as constituting an element of permanent disturbance to the peace of Europe. That he was enabled to do so, was due not only to his own initiative, but to the staunch support he received from the Emperor Napoleon. This assistance, however, was not very clearly manifested at the time; but the broad fact remained, that Sardinia had put herself forward at the Congress of Paris as the avowed and recognised representative of the cause of Italy.

Throughout the Peninsula the hegemony of Sardinia was now almost universally accepted, and all those who, from one cause or other, were opposed to Austrian rule in Italy, learned to look upon Victor Emmanuel as their champion. In recognition of the prowess displayed by the Sardinian troops in the Crimea, a subscription was raised in all the chief Italian towns to purchase a hundred cannon for the fortress of Alexandria. Such a subscription, made for such a purpose, could not but be regarded as a hostile demonstration directed against the Government of Austria. The relations between the Courts of Vienna and Turin became more and more cold. The coldness with which the Emperor Francis Joseph was received, during a progress he

made at this period throughout his Italian possessions, was attributed to the machinations of the Sardinian Government. Moreover, the susceptibilities of Austria were excited by the sudden *rapprochement* between Turin and St. Petersburg. As I have said before, there was no real cause of hostility between Russia and Sardinia. Of all the Powers which had joined directly or indirectly in the coalition against Russia, Austria, though she had done the least, was probably the most obnoxious to Russia; and the Government of the Czar welcomed the opportunity of displaying its sympathies for Sardinia as the hereditary antagonist of Austria. Violent attacks against Victor Emmanuel and his Ministers appeared in the official organs of the Austrian Government; and after the exchange of an embittered diplomatic correspondence, the Austrian Embassy was suddenly recalled from Turin. "The decisive moment," as Victor Emmanuel said at this period to Count Cavour, "was now approaching," and neither the King nor his Minister probably expected that four years would still have to elapse before the active renewal of the conflict suspended for the time on the battle-field of Novara.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ORSINI OUTRAGE.

LOOKING back at the past with the light of our present knowledge, it seems as if the progress made by Sardinia towards the attainment of her ambition, must have been deemed marvellous by all who were in a position to contrast 1849 and 1857. But at the time this progress was not so manifest to onlookers. The Crimean war was over, the Congress of Paris was a thing of the past, and yet Sardinia had derived no positive or tangible advantage from the part which she had played in the settlement of the Eastern question. Nothing had come of the expressions of sympathy uttered on behalf of Italy at Paris. The reported alliance between Victor Emmanuel and the Emperor of the French had not eventuated in any active measures, and a very general belief prevailed throughout the Peninsula, that Italy would be sacrificed once more, as she always had been hitherto, to the political interests of Europe. This belief tended for the time to impair the popularity of the policy with which the

King had identified himself under Count Cavour's guidance. The Mazzinian party lost no opportunity of manifesting their conviction, that the Government of Sardinia was not in earnest in its professed desire to promote the liberation of Italy from foreign rule. The clergy used their influence to alienate the popular feeling on the royal cause. Then, again, the general dissatisfaction, naturally felt by a frugal population such as that of Piedmont, at the lavish expenditure of the Government and the increase of taxation, tended strongly to strengthen the hands of those who were never tired of asserting that Sardinia would do wisely to attend to her own affairs, and not to adventure on Quixotic schemes, from which she was never likely to gain much, and might in all likelihood be a heavy loser.

All these influences combined affected the electoral body, and at the general election which took place in the latter days of 1857, a Parliament was returned in which the power of the Opposition was seriously strengthened. The Ministry could only rely on a small and uncertain majority, and it was on the cards at any moment that a resolution might have been adopted inconsistent with the prosecution of the Ministerial policy. The Opposition numbered amidst its members many of the King's most trusted personal friends and adherents, and if Victor Emmanuel had yielded to the pressure brought to bear upon him, Cavour would have had to resign; and with his resignation the idea of the Franco-

Italian coalition against Austria would have fallen to the ground. The King, however, remained firm. His great personal authority was exerted actively to hinder the Opposition from pushing matters to an extremity, and the result was that Cavour was enabled to fulfil his double policy—that of ruling with the support of a Parliamentary majority, and yet of keeping Sardinia before the world as the champion of Italian independence. At the moment, however, when the internal difficulties due to the half-hearted support afforded to the Government by the new Chambers had been partially overcome, the cause of Italian independence was exposed to a fresh and unforeseen danger, by a crime, the responsibility for which attaches indirectly, if not directly, to Mazzini and his followers.

In February, 1858, a certain Felice Orsini attempted to assassinate Napoleon III. on his way to the Opera by the discharge of an infernal machine. If the attempt had succeeded, the whole course of history would probably have been altered. Of all futile speculations, the most futile is the discussion as to what would have taken place if something had happened which did not happen. Still, one may fairly say that, if Louis Napoleon had perished by Orsini's hand, France would never have gone to war with Austria in defence of Italy; and if the overthrow of Austria's dominion south of the Alps had been postponed until after German unity had become an accomplished fact, it is more than doubtful whether

an united Fatherland would ever have tolerated so great a blow to Teutonic ascendency as that involved in the cession of Lombardy and Venetia. As it was, the attempt, unsuccessful though it proved in its immediate object, was all but proving successful in detaching France from the Sardinian alliance. Whenever the history of the Second Empire is submitted to the calm judgment of an unprejudiced generation, the truth will, I think, be recognised that, whatever may have been the defects or failings of the Imperial *régime*, it represented for many years the free choice of the French nation. The dread of anarchy and of revolutionary violence, which caused France in 1851 to entrust her fortunes blindly to the Prince President, had not exhausted its strength in 1858. Napoleon III. was still regarded by the great mass of Frenchmen as the Saviour of Society, and the attempt of an Italian revolutionist to cut short his life by assassination rekindled all the morbid antipathy with which the name of the Revolution was invested in the eyes of Frenchmen at the period of which I write. Throughout France, there was an outcry that a cosmopolitan revolution had resolved to encompass the extinction of the dynasty that had saved society from ruin; and this outcry was not unnaturally directed against the States in which the revolutionary party had found protection, if not sympathy. Those States were England and Sardinia. The relations between France and England assumed an attitude of something very like open hostility.

The threats of the French colonels were responded to by the volunteer movement, by the acquittal of Dr. Bernard, and by the temporary downfall of Lord Palmerston on account of his alleged subserviency to the Court of the Tuileries. The result of the jealousy thus created between the two countries was, that the English Government turned towards Austria as a counterpoise to the predominance of France, and that an understanding was concluded by which England agreed not to co-operate with France in any attempt to bring about the emancipation of Italy.

It was, however, against Piedmont that the chief current of French indignation was directed. Orsini, as a Lombard, and as a disciple of Mazzini, was considered, not altogether unjustly, to be a representative of the Italian National movement. Turin was denounced in the Parisian press as being the hot-bed of revolution, and Victor Emmanuel and his Ministers were held up to obloquy as accomplices in schemes which had for their ultimate end the disruption of society. This popular outcry was turned to advantage by two parties who had always great influence at the Tuileries—the Imperialists, who disliked the Parliamentary institutions of Sardinia, and the Clericals, who favoured the cause of the Papacy. Under the pressure of these influences, communications were addressed from Paris to the Government of Turin, calling upon the King to modify the constitution of his States in such a manner as to restrict

the action of the revolutionary party, and to satisfy the exigencies of French opinion.

As I have said before, Victor Emmanuel was never personally enamoured of constitutional theories. No man had less sympathy with revolutionary doctrines, and any measure by which the Mazzinians could have been rendered powerless would in itself have met with his approval; but he had the discernment to understand that, for the accomplishment of his life's ambition, it was essential for him to uphold his character as the champion alike of Constitutional Government and of National Independence. To have made any sort of *coup d'état* at the bidding of France, or even to have forced upon the Sardinian Parliament any material curtailment of the popular institutions guaranteed by the *Statuto*, would have been to forfeit his title to be considered the representative of Constitutionalism. He turned, therefore, a deaf ear to the representations, half-threatening and half-cajoling, with which he was assailed at this period, and refused to modify in any way the laws of his kingdom. His views on the subject were expressed in a private letter, written at this time to Napoleon III., in which the King, after explaining the reasons why he could not accede to the requirements of his ally, concluded by the significant remark, that for eight hundred years the Princes of his house had preferred the road of exile to the path of dishonour. The Emperor Napoleon acknowledged the force of the King's arguments, and the difficulty was finally settled by

the introduction of a Press Law, rendering it illegal for Sardinian newspapers to publish articles provocative of rebellion against the Governments of friendly Powers. Shortly after this singularly anodyne legislation, the King's Government seized the opportunity of vindicating its independence of action by taking up warmly the case of the *Cagliari*. In the archives of diplomacy there must be many volumes filled with documents about this well-nigh forgotten controversy. It is enough to say that the *Cagliari* was a Sardinian trading steamer plying between Genoa and Tunis. On one of her voyages the steamer was seized by a band of revolutionists, who took command of the vessel, and effected a landing on Neapolitan territory, where they raised the insurrectionary flag. The rising ended, as all the Mazzinian risings ended before and after, in a miserable and complete *fiasco*. The insurgents were taken prisoners, and the vessel was seized. The Sardinian Government, however, demanded the restitution of the *Cagliari*, on the ground that the crew had been overmastered by violence, and were no more responsible for her subsequent movements than if they had been boarded by Algerine pirates. The Government of the Two Sicilies contended, on the other hand, that the crew were in reality accomplices, and that the expedition had been organised with the sanction, if not at the instigation, of the Court of Turin. A prolonged controversy took place, which was complicated by the fact that the engineers of the *Cagliari*

were British subjects. Popular feeling in England was enlisted on behalf of our fellow-countrymen, who were imprisoned in a Neapolitan fortress, and at last Sardinia succeeded in obtaining the restitution of the vessel and the release of the crew.

Meanwhile events were hastening onwards. Count Cavour, in the summer of 1858, paid a private visit to the Emperor Napoleon at Plombières, and the conditions of an arrangement were finally arrived at, under which France agreed to assist Italy in the event of a war with Austria. Even now the precise terms of this understanding are not fully known, and at the time the very existence of such a contract was kept a profound secret. Still, somehow or other, an impression gained ground abroad that a war between Austria and Sardinia had become inevitable, and this impression was strengthened by words dropped by Victor Emmanuel. Speaking at this time to one of his intimates, he said, "By next year I shall either be King of Italy or plain Monsieur de Savoie;" and though the words were spoken in confidence, and not repeated, yet it was known—as indeed the King meant it to be known—that the end was near at hand.

On the 1st of January, 1859, Napoleon III., while receiving the State visit of the diplomatic body, startled Europe by expressing his regret to Baron Hübner that the relations between France and Austria were in so unsatisfactory a condition. The Napoleonic dynasty had always disregarded the tra-

ditions of diplomacy; but it was impossible that such a declaration should not be received in Italy as tantamount to an assertion that France intended to intervene on behalf of the Italian cause. The position, however, of the Sardinian Government at this moment was one of extreme difficulty. Whatever may have been the precise purport of the agreement entered into at Plombières, it was clearly one upon whose enforcement Sardinia had no power to insist, if the Emperor of the French was not disposed to fulfil his engagements. It may be safely assumed, from the general character of Louis Napoleon's statesmanship, that he had committed himself to as few definite statements as possible, and that the King and his Ministers relied far more upon what they believed to be the Emperor's intentions, than on any written contract which they could produce, in case of need. Moreover, they were both too well acquainted with the tendency to vacillation which Louis Napoleon had already begun to display, to feel confident that he would adhere to his purpose until he was once irrevocably committed to action. Thus, while on the one hand the King and his Ministers were most anxious to accentuate the force of the Imperial declaration, and to make its significance fully understood throughout Italy, they were afraid to take any step which might bring about an actual collision with Austria, while they had no absolute certainty that in such an event France would be upon their side.

On the 10th of January, while Europe was still

ringing with the language used by Napoleon III. towards Austria, the Sardinian session commenced. The speech from the throne, which, as usual, was spoken by Victor Emmanuel in person, formed the subject of long and anxious ministerial discussions, and was only finally decided upon after direct consultation with the Tuileries. At the King's own suggestion, the speech concluded with the following words :—"Our condition is not free from danger, because, although we respect treaties, we are not, and cannot be, insensible to the cry of anguish which is raised towards us from so many parts of Italy. Strong, however, in union, confident in our good right, we await, at once prudent and determined, the decrees of Divine Providence."

The King himself made no secret of the importance he attached to this utterance. By his voice and gestures he accentuated the significance of these stirring words, and the tumult of enthusiasm with which they were received by the Chambers, showed that they were understood as being tantamount to a declaration that the time was at hand for Sardinia to appear once more on the field of battle as the champion of Italy.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS CLOTILDE.

ON the very day upon which the King, by his speech to the Chambers, virtually threw down the gauntlet in the face of Austria, Prince Jerome Napoleon arrived at Turin on a visit to the Court. It was supposed at first that the Prince came in the character of a private envoy from the Emperor of the French, but it soon became known that his principal if not his sole mission was to propose for the hand of the Princess Clotilde, the eldest daughter of Victor Emmanuel. There seems to be no doubt that this marriage was first suggested to Count Cavour at Plombières, and was indeed made one of the conditions upon which the Emperor agreed to entertain the notion of an armed intervention on behalf of Italy. It was natural enough that the marriage in question should have been desired at the Tuileries. Louis Napoleon had indeed vindicated his self-made royalty by choosing as his bride a lady whose titles lay in her personal grace and beauty, and not in her exalted birth; but having done so, and having

flattered French vanity by showing that the elect of the French people was powerful enough to choose his wife for himself without reference to Court traditions, he was now desirous to prove to the world and to France that the royal families of Europe were not unwilling to ally themselves with the Napoleonic dynasty. Prince Napoleon himself—who, notwithstanding all the vagaries of his chequered career, has never lost sight of the truth that for his own advancement he must uphold the Napoleonic legend—was quite shrewd enough to see the advantages which his union with the young Princess would confer upon himself and his family. The life of the young Prince Imperial alone stood between him and his succession to the post of heir-presumptive to the Imperial throne. To be the father of sons would undoubtedly strengthen his hold upon France and upon his cousin. He had arrived at an age when men who wish to leave heirs, and have led hard lives, begin to think seriously of marrying, and it is also natural to suppose that his personal vanity was flattered by the notion of becoming the husband of a Princess of one of the oldest and most distinguished of European dynasties.

The very reasons, however, which rendered the marriage desirable at the Tuileries, tended to make it unpalatable at Turin. Though Victor Emmanuel was regarded throughout Europe as the champion of a revolutionary cause, and though he professed, and from his own point of view professed sincerely, a life-

long devotion to Liberal ideas, he was always at heart a king. With all his bluntness of demeanour and simplicity of manner, he never forgot that he was a Prince of the House of Savoy, the lineal representative of a long generation of kings and princes. A mushroom dynasty such as that of the Bonapartes was, according to his instinct, unworthy to take rank with the Royal Houses with which the scions of his race had been wont to ally themselves. Even if there had been no personal objection, a marriage between a Princess of Savoy and a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte would have seemed to him a *mésalliance*. Powerful as the Second Empire was at that period of its duration, its stability was, as the event proved, excessively uncertain, and Victor Emmanuel was not the man to entertain any illusions as to the essentially transitory character of the dynasty which ruled over France in virtue of the *coup d'état* and the Plébiscite.

In addition to this, the personal character of the Imperial suitor was not such as to recommend him to a father's approval as a husband for his daughter. A man may be of very lax morality himself in his own private relations, and yet on that account he is all the less likely to select as his son-in-law a man whose habits of life may be thought to resemble his own. Moreover, Prince Jerome Napoleon had not only the repute of the ordinary laxity of life common enough amidst royal princes; whether with or without justice, his personal reputation was below the standard required even of princes whose names have

become notorious as men of pleasure. Rightly or wrongly, he was not credited with that personal courage which often redeems a life of self-indulgence, and which Victor Emmanuel regarded as the highest of manly virtues. Altogether, it would probably have been difficult to pick out from the whole of Europe a prince who, from his position and his repute, would have been less acceptable to the King of Sardinia as the husband of his eldest and best-beloved daughter. Whatever may have been his shortcomings in other domestic relations, Victor Emmanuel was a kind and affectionate father. The Princess Clotilde was at this time barely sixteen. The early loss of her mother had strengthened and developed a character of great natural strength and vigour, and when almost a child herself, she had become a second mother to her younger brothers and sisters, and was regarded as the guardian angel of the widowed household. The King must be credited with an absence of human feeling, if we were to suppose that he could have given up his daughter to such a lot as almost of necessity awaited the wife of Prince Jerome without the utmost reluctance, and upon first hearing of the proposal he absolutely refused his consent.

The arguments, however, which Count Cavour brought to bear upon his royal master, were of a kind which he was powerless to resist. The help of France, so the Minister argued, was essential not only to the liberation of Italy, but to the preservation of the Sardinian kingdom. Things had gone so far

that a war with Austria was unavoidable. In such a war Sardinia must be worsted, unless she had on her side some great European Power. France was the one Power prepared to help Italy by anything more efficacious than moral support, and the armed intervention of France could alone be obtained through the personal individuality of Napoleon III. The Emperor of the French had set his heart upon the marriage between his cousin and the Princess Clotilde as one of the chief considerations upon which he counted in return for the risk he was prepared to run; and to refuse this offer of marriage would be to alienate the one potentate upon whom Italy could rely at the impending crisis of her fate. Victor Emmanuel, therefore, was confronted with the alternative of either sacrificing the object of his life's ambition, or of surrendering his daughter to an unwelcome union. It should fairly be remembered that, amidst the traditions in which Victor Emmanuel had been reared, royal marriages were regarded as matters to be arranged solely and exclusively by considerations of dynastic convenience. A Princess of the House of Savoy was expected to give her hand wherever the welfare of the dynasty demanded, just as a Prince was expected to risk his life on the field of battle whenever and wherever the flag of Savoy was engaged. How far these considerations justified Victor Emmanuel's decision is a matter on which opinions will differ. It is only just, however, to say that the King never gave a greater proof of the

extent to which he was prepared to subordinate all other considerations to the fulfilment of the mission to which he, following his father's footsteps, had devoted his life, than when he gave his consent to the marriage between the Princess Clotilde and Prince Jerome Napoleon.

Even at the last, his consent was qualified by the stipulation that the Princess should only accept the Prince as her husband of her own free choice and will. The stipulation, however, was one of those empty declarations which men make to reconcile their own consciences to unwelcome acts; and the Princess herself, as the King was well aware, was prepared to consent to whatever was demanded of her in the name of duty. There is something strangely pathetic in the reply which the young Princess is stated to have made when the proposal was formally submitted to her. "The marriage," she said, "is desired by my father; I know therefore in his opinion this union must be useful to my family and to my country, and therefore I have no hesitation in giving my consent."

It is said that both the King and Count Cavour were affected to tears when this answer was given, but sentimental considerations were not allowed to interfere with their resolution; and what had to be done was done quickly. The marriage day was fixed within little over a fortnight of the Prince's arrival as a suitor; and as soon as the news that the matter had been arranged was communicated to the

Tuileries, a secret treaty was concluded between France and Sardinia, who were represented respectively by General Niel and Count Cavour. By this treaty, whose conditions were not disclosed till long after, France agreed to assist Sardinia in the event of a war between herself and Austria. France further agreed to consent in the aggrandisement of Sardinia by the annexation of the Lombardo-Venetian provinces and of the Legations, in virtue of which the Kingdom of Northern Italy would comprise a population of 11,000,000. In consideration of these concessions, Sardinia agreed on her part to cede the provinces of Nice and Savoy to France upon the conclusion of the war.

The secret of this convention was kept successfully, and the unpopularity with which the marriage between the Princess Clotilde and Prince Napoleon was viewed by a population devotedly attached to the House of Savoy, was not mitigated by a knowledge of the price for which this alliance had been purchased. At the end of January, the Princess sailed from Genoa for France, in company with her husband. It was told at the time that, as the Imperial squadron entered Marseilles, the captain of the vessel expressed a hope that the Princess would not be alarmed by the salutes with which her arrival was greeted. "Sir," was the proud answer, "the ladies of my House have been taught not to be afraid at the sound of cannon." Beyond this saying, little has since been recorded of the lady who is now the

wife of the head of the House of Bonaparte. It is enough to say that, living at the Imperial Court in the days when scandal was most rife, and exposed to all the temptations of a notoriously uncongenial and ill-assorted marriage, she has contrived to keep her name absolutely free from reproach, and to retain the respect of her adopted country, even after the deposition of the Imperial dynasty, by the manner in which, under circumstances of great difficulty, she has fulfilled her duty as a wife and a mother.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DECLARATION OF WAR.

AFTER the marriage of the Princess Clotilde, the outbreak of war between Austria and Sardinia was regarded throughout Italy as a mere question of days. The most intense excitement prevailed throughout the Peninsula; but the attitude of the population showed that the lesson of 1848 had not been forgiven, and that the national movement had now assumed the character which it had been the end and object of Count Cavour's policy to impress upon it. Even in the States where the hatred to the existing order of things, and the craving for independence, were the strongest, there was a complete absence of any outbreak or popular demonstration, such as might afford the enemies of Italy an excuse for saying that the national movement was in reality of a revolutionary character. The word of order had been passed that no disturbance of any kind was to take place till after a declaration of hostilities, and this order was faithfully obeyed. Meanwhile, Sardinia had begun to arm, on the plea that her

independence was threatened by the concentration of Austrian troops upon her frontiers. A foreign legion was raised under the command of Garibaldi, and from every part of the Peninsula volunteers came flocking in to enlist in the ranks of the Piedmontese army. These volunteers, the majority of whom came from Lombardy and Venetia, were not of the class that had hitherto taken the lead in revolutionary movements. They were for the most part young men of birth, rank, and fortune; and indeed there was hardly a great name in Northern Italy, some representative of which was not to be found enrolled in the Sardinian army.

No secret was made by the King, or indeed by his Ministers, as to their belief that war was at hand, or as to their desire for its immediate commencement. About this time both General Narvaes and the Grand Duke of Saxony visited Turin, and were publicly informed by Victor Emmanuel that the preservation of peace was impossible, that Italy was determined upon war, and that any further delay would be fraught with the gravest danger to the cause, not only of Italy but of order. Days and weeks, however, went on, and still no *casus belli* could be established. The plain truth is that the French alliance was the keystone of the King's policy, and that, as Sardinia was not in a position to make war successfully without the aid of France, it was France and not Sardinia which really had to decide whether there should be peace or war. By the secret treaty concluded at

Plombières, Napoleon III. had indeed pledged himself to defend Piedmont if she was attacked by Austria; so long, however, as Austria committed no overt act of hostility, France was not bound to intervene. The idea of a war for the liberation of Italy was not popular with the mass of Frenchmen, or, at any rate, with the majority of French politicians. In order to enlist public sentiment in France on the side of Italy, and in order also to avoid exciting the jealousy of the European powers, it was essential that Austria and not Italy should be the assailant. This state of things was perfectly well understood on the Continent, and during the early months of 1859 the utmost efforts of European diplomacy were exerted, in order to devise a compromise by which the necessity for an appeal to arms might be averted. In these efforts England took a prominent, if not the leading part. A Conservative Government under the late Lord Derby was then in power, and the sympathies of the Ministry towards the cause of Italy were, to say the least, lukewarm. Still, it is fair to remember that the idea of a Franco-Sardinian war against Austria was one which no English Government could regard with any great sympathy. At that time the policy of France was looked upon in England with extreme, if not well-merited distrust. The result of the Crimean campaign had been undoubtedly to aggrandise the military reputation of France, to the detriment of England. Since the termination of the war, France had shown a dis-

position to ally herself with Russia, and Austria seemed to be the only Power on whose co-operation England could rely to uphold that settlement of the Eastern question which, in accordance with the traditions of her diplomacy, she regarded as of vital importance to her own interests. Even, therefore, if Lord Palmerston himself had been in power at this critical period, the influence of England would have been employed to hinder any actual outbreak of hostilities in the Peninsula, though, at the same time, this influence would have been exerted in a far less offensive manner than that employed by Lord Malmesbury, who was then Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Proposal after proposal was submitted by the Neutral Powers, all these proposals having for their object the avoidance of any actual conflict. The idea which found most favour with Europe was that of an International Congress. If the statesmanship of Vienna had been equal in sagacity at this period to that of Turin, the proposal for a Congress would have been eagerly accepted, and France would have been thereby released from her obligation to assist Sardinia by arms. Fortunately, however, for Piedmont, the invincible reluctance of Austria to acknowledge the claim of Sardinia to have any voice in the settlement of the Italian question protracted, and finally rendered abortive, the negotiations for a Congress. The position of the Government of Turin was, as I have said, extremely difficult. It was

impossible for Victor Emmanuel and his Ministers to insist openly upon war as the only possible solution. They were bound to represent Sardinia as threatened in her independence by the attitude of Austria, and therefore they could not refuse to entertain any proposition by which that independence might presumably be guaranteed. Yet, at the same time, the acceptance of any pacific compromise would have deprived Sardinia of the aid for which she had sacrificed so much, and would have postponed indefinitely the overthrow of Austrian domination south of the Alps. While, therefore, professing a desire for peace, Victor Emmanuel and his Ministers had in reality to throw every difficulty in their power in the way of a pacific solution. It was at this period that Count Cavour's genius displayed itself most signally. It was due to his statesmanship that France was kept from drawing back from the undertaking on which she had entered, and that Austria was half-goaded and half-cajoled into abandoning her neutral attitude for one of active hostility. At the end of March, Count Cavour went to Paris, and succeeded in persuading the Emperor that war was the only escape from the dangers arising out of the Austro-Italian controversy. It was understood that he brought back from Paris a positive promise of immediate co-operation, and on his return he was welcomed by the assemblage of a vast multitude in front of the Palace, where he resided with his brother. It is narrated that on the following morning he went

to give the King an account of the demonstration, but Victor Emmanuel interrupted him by saying, "There is no need for you to tell me anything, for while you were standing on the balcony, I was standing amidst the crowd below, shouting 'Hurrah for Cavour!' with the best of them."

From the date of Cavour's visit to Paris, the question of war or peace was virtually decided in favour of the former alternative. At the very moment when English diplomatists imagined that they had finally succeeded in removing all the difficulties which had hitherto precluded the meeting of a Congress, the Government of Vienna suddenly upset all the combinations of the Neutral Powers. Things had now gone so far, that it is doubtful whether any concession on the part of Austria could really have averted a resort to arms; but it was in accordance with the ill-luck which has characterised all the later statesmanship of Austria, that her Ministers should have thrown down the gauntlet just at a period when it was all-important for her to place the responsibility of the war upon her enemies.

On the 21st of April an ultimatum was suddenly despatched from Vienna, calling on the Government of Turin, under pain of an immediate declaration of war, to disarm within three days, and to dismiss all the Italian volunteers who had taken service in her armies. No time was lost at Turin in accepting the desired challenge. On the 23rd, the Sardinian army was placed on a war footing, a state of siege was

proclaimed by the Parliament, the Prince of Savoy-Carignan, the King's cousin, was appointed regent, and the King, after attending mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Turin, proceeded to the frontier to take command of the army in the field.

Probably at no period of his life was Victor Emmanuel so elated as he was at the commencement of the war, for which, in his own words, "he had prayed and waited for ten long years." Nothing could exceed the frankness with which he avowed that the approaching war was the realisation of his life's ambition. In speaking to General Ulloa, who was going on a mission to the Liberals in Tuscany, he told him that his one aim was to free Italy, and added, "You may depend upon it that, if I had believed Mazzini had had it in his power to make Italy independent, I should long ago have been a Mazzinian myself." War was in itself a delight to his restless, fearless nature. It was as a soldier that the higher and nobler instincts of his character found their fullest exercise. Fighting of any kind would always have been welcome to him; moreover, the one dominant sentiment of his mind—the desire to fulfil the destiny of his race, and to avenge his father's memory—seemed at this moment to be on the verge of rapid and complete satisfaction. Before leaving Turin he made his will, and left instructions to his cousin that, in the event of his death and the defeat of his armies by the Austrians, the only things he was to think of were to place the Royal

children in safety, and to carry away the standards which Charles Albert had captured from the Austrians.

Indeed, at this moment Victor Emmanuel's elation of spirit was so great, that his Generals and Ministers thought it necessary to caution him against any reckless exposure of his person on the field of battle; but to all these remonstrances the King turned a deaf ear. "I am going," he said, "to send some thousands of men to death, and how could I ask them to die for Italy if I was not prepared to show them by my own example that the cause was one worth dying for?"

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CAMPAIGN OF SOLFERINO.

AT the period when the fortunes of Italy attracted a much keener attention than at present, an accusation was frequently brought against Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour that, by calling in the aid of France to effect the liberation of Italy, they had sacrificed the real interests of the country to their own ambition. The Mazzinians and the Cosmopolitan Liberals, who regarded the Napoleonic Empire, not altogether without reason, as their most formidable enemy, were never tired of asserting that Italy could ultimately have freed herself by her own efforts, and that the French alliance might easily have been dispensed with, had it not been for the personal desire of Victor Emmanuel to impose a Monarchy upon Italy in lieu of a Republic. This assertion, which was naturally gratifying to the national vanity of the Italians, was apparently confirmed by the extraordinary success which only a year later attended the Garibaldian invasion of the Two Sicilies. About the true causes of that success,

I shall have occasion to speak shortly. It is enough now to say, that the experience of the last twenty years has dispelled the short-lived illusion about the possibility of regular troops being worsted by undisciplined levies, and of fortresses being captured by popular enthusiasm. We have learnt again to recognise the old truth that the fortune of war depends not upon the merit of the cause for which the combatants are fighting, and still less upon the enthusiasm of the belligerents, but upon military skill, numbers, and organisation. Of course, it is utterly impossible to say of any event which has not taken place that it could not have happened; but on any calm calculation of the conditions of a war waged between Austria and Sardinia alone, even if aided by a national rising throughout the Peninsula, it is obvious the chances of success were strongly in favour of the former Power. From a military point of view, the contest between Austria and Piedmont was a hopeless one for the latter; and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the result of a campaign is decided by military considerations. Nor is there any reason to suppose that, if the campaign of 1859 had never taken place, the relative military strength of Sardinia would have increased, or that of Austria declined. It may indeed be said, that if Italy had waited till 1866, she might have taken advantage of the war between Austria and Prussia to drive the Austrians out of the Peninsula by her own unaided efforts; but, in the first place, it is more than doubtful

whether Sadowa would ever have been fought if it had not been for the battle of Solferino; and, in the second place, it must fairly be owned that, even in 1866, Sardinia, strengthened as she was by the annexation of Central and Southern Italy, proved unequal to do more than hold her own against Austria. If we once enter on the domain of what might have been, we are bound not to overlook the fact, that if the war of Italian liberation had been postponed till after the unification of Germany had been effected, it is more than probable that Austria would have been supported by Germany against any attempt to deprive her of her trans-Alpine possessions.

At any rate, looking at the facts of the case as they appeared to be in 1859, Victor Emmanuel and Cavour were justified in their belief that Italy had no reasonable chance, within any given time, of effecting her emancipation from foreign rule without the aid of some great military Power. France was the only Power who was at once able and willing to render this asssistance, and France herself would never have rendered that aid had her destinies been under the control of any other Government, whether Monarchy or Republic, than that of the Napoleons. It would be absurd to imagine that the King of Sardinia and his great Minister were not fully alive to the evils and inconveniences inseparable from the French alliance, and not the least of the many sacrifices which Victor Emmanuel made for the cause of Italy lay in

his acceptance of an alliance by which, not only as a sovereign but as a soldier, he was necessarily placed in a subordinate and secondary position. As I have said before, it is not my purpose to enter at any length upon strategical discussions. My object is to narrate the part which Victor Emmanuel played in the unification of Italy. Even if it were otherwise, the story of the campaign which ended at Solferino belongs rather to the history of France than to that of Italy.' It is only natural that Italian writers should seek to magnify the part played by the Sardinian army in the war with Austria. Italians may well look back with pride upon the conduct of their troops during this eventful campaign. But still, all candid students of history, whether Italian or foreign, cannot shut their eyes to the fact that, in the main, the war of 1859 with Austria was fought and the victory won by France and not by Sardinia. It lay upon the cards that if the Austrians had displayed greater energy at the commencement of the campaign, they might have crushed the Sardinian army and even occupied Turin before the arrival of the French. War was declared on the 27th of April, and it was only on the 13th of May that the Emperor Napoleon landed at Genoa. During this interval of suspense, the Sardinian troops had virtually to remain on the defensive. Turin was left well-nigh to the protection of the citizens. The dykes with which the whole valley of the Po is intersected were cut, and the plain was placed under water, so as to retard

the advance of the Austrians. This artificial inundation involved the destruction of the harvest, and terrible loss, if not ruin, to the cultivators of that fertile soil. To anyone acquainted with the cautious and almost parsimonious character of the Piedmontese peasantry, no greater proof could be given of the popular enthusiasm excited by the war, than the fact that the peasants themselves assisted actively in flooding their own lands. The first serious battle took place at Montebello, at which place the Austrians sustained a defeat from the French. On the 30th of May the second of the four great battles of the campaign took place at Palestro. It was in this battle that the Sardinian army, led by the King in person, achieved its chief triumph. For a long time the issue remained doubtful, but finally, the fate of the day was decided by an impetuous charge of the Bassalieri, assisted by a corps of French Zouaves. In this charge Victor Emmanuel advanced at the head of his troops, and was for some little time actually cut off from the bulk of his soldiers. In honour of the personal share the King had taken in this action, he was appointed to a nominal command in the Zouaves; and throughout his life he was fond of describing himself as the Corporal of Zouaves. As a result of this victory, the Austrians had to retire, and there can be no doubt that the battle exercised a very important influence on the final issue of the campaign. In Italian records the battle of Palestro is given perhaps even more than its fair share of significance. This is

natural enough, as it is the only engagement in which the Sardinian troops took and kept the lead. It was essential to the objects for which Napoleon III. had entered upon the war, that the chief if not the sole credit of the campaign should redound to France, and that his own leadership as a military general should be made as conspicuous as possible. The campaign was conducted under the control of the French generals, and it was their policy to keep the Sardinian contingent as much in the background as possible. Personally, the Emperor of the French did everything in his power to avoid offending the susceptibilities of the Italians; but his generals were not equally considerate, and Victor Emmanuel had to put up with much that was eminently distasteful to his pride.

Moreover, the vexation which naturally had been caused to the King by the pre-eminence assigned to the French throughout the campaign was increased, in as far as his personal feelings were concerned, by the exploits achieved by the free lances under the command of Garibaldi. To the "hunters of the Alps," as this corps was described, there had been assigned the duty of harassing the Austrians in the broken country lying at the foot of the Alpine ranges. The task was comparatively an easy one. The Austrian outposts were harassed and disheartened by the ill fortune which attended the main body of the army. The country surrounding the Italian lakes was one in which regular troops were

at a disadvantage. The population was bitterly hostile to the Austrian soldiery. And, also, it is only fair to admit that General Garibaldi's real military talent as a guerilla leader found full scope in this mountain warfare. Still, be the explanation what it may, the fact remains that the Garibaldian volunteers, alone and unassisted, inflicted a series of more or less damaging defeats upon the Austrians in the neighbourhood of Como and Varese, at a time when the exploits of the regular Sardinian troops were obscured by the prowess of their too powerful ally. To speak the truth, the Lombard campaign was one fought by France with the assistance of a Sardinian contingent, and there can be little doubt that, if Victor Emmanuel could have followed the dictates of his own heart, he would far sooner have been leading the Garibaldian volunteers than have served in the regular campaign, practically, though not nominally, under the orders of the French staff.

It would, however, be doing less than justice to the King's character to suppose that his personal annoyances obscured his recognition of the ends which were being achieved by the aid of France. The battle of Magenta, which took place on the 3rd of June, laid Milan open to the invading force, and compelled the Austrians to seek the protection of the Quadrilateral. On the 8th of June, Napoleon III. and Victor Emmanuel entered Milan in triumph. The French were, of necessity, the heroes of the hour; but to Victor Emmanuel the welcome given

had a personal as well as a political character. He was welcomed not only as the liberator of Lombardy, but as the son of Charles Albert. Immediately upon the entrance of the allied armies, Lombardy was declared part and parcel of the Sardinian kingdom, and the head of the House of Savoy was once more greeted with the title of King of Italy.

Meanwhile, the Emperor Francis Joseph had arrived at Verona, to inspire his troops by his presence. So long as the Quadrilateral was intact, the dominion of Austria in the Peninsula was not seriously endangered, and if the Austrian generals had followed the tactics of 1848, and had awaited attack behind their fortresses, the issue of the war might have been different. Radetsky, however, had died the year before, and with him the Austrians had lost their one commander of military genius. The presence of the young Emperor upon the field of battle seemed to necessitate immediate action. General Benedek, the Commander-in-Chief, though brave and impetuous, was not possessed of strategical ability, and on the 23rd of June the Austrian army crossed the Mincio in force, with the view of marching upon Milan. On the following day the Austrians were attacked by the Franco-Sardinian armies. The battle lasted from early morning till close on sunset. The fortunes of the day were for a time doubtful. The Austrians, who fought with stubborn courage, were at last dislodged from their positions by the onslaught of their assailants. Since that time the destructiveness of

modern warfare has increased in terrible proportions, but at the date of its occurrence, Solferino was regarded as one of the bloodiest of battles recorded in history. The main attack upon the Austrians was made in two points—at Solferino by the French, and at San Martino by the Sardinians. Both attacks proved ultimately successful, but the first-named was the more important of the two, while the latter was chiefly useful in diverting the resistance of the enemy. The combined operations of the allied armies resulted in a decisive, though costly victory, the loss of the attacking force in officers being necessarily the heavier of the two. The allies lost 936 officers and 17,305 men, while the Austrian muster-roll of killed and wounded amounted only to 630 officers and 19,311 men. At the end of the day, the allied armies held the positions occupied by the enemy in the morning. The final repulse of the Austrians was effected by a junction between the Sardinian and the French armies, in which the former were led by the King himself. This defeat, coming at the end of a series of disasters to the Austrian arms, seemed at the time to be overwhelming, and on the morrow of Solferino the allied armies looked forward with confidence to an immediate advance upon the Quadrilateral.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PEACE OF VILLAFRANCA.

THE well-known lesson, that it is easy to let loose a flood, but impossible to limit its overflow when once let loose, received a fresh illustration in the rapid and unforeseen extension of the Italian revolution. When Napoleon III. and Count Cavour agreed between them to make war on Austria, neither of the two—and most certainly not the former—had reckoned upon so unbroken and so overwhelming a success as that which had attended the Franco-Sardinian armies, from the very outset of the campaign to the crowning victory of Solferino. According to any ordinary forecast, the contest was certain to have proved a severe, and not altogether an unequal one. So long as the fortunes of war wavered in the balance, the other States of the Peninsula might reasonably have been expected to remain neutral. At the same time, the military pride of the French nation might safely be relied upon to carry on the war, till the ascendency of France had been finally established by the complete expulsion of the

Austrians from the Peninsula, and by the fulfilment of the proud boast of Napoleon III. at the commencement of the war, that henceforward "Italy should be free from the Alps to the Adriatic."

These calculations, however reasonable in themselves, were upset by the unexpected collapse of the Austrian armies. There was, indeed, no lack of personal bravery on the part of the Imperial troops. They fought with all the gallantry and all the perfection of discipline in which Austria stood pre-eminent. But still they were uniformly worsted and defeated. Whether their defeat was due to defective generalship, to divided counsels, to want of heart, or to the accidents of war, matters little. The result, be the cause what it may, remains the same. Even before Solferino the contest was regarded as over, and the Italian States hastened to shake off the rule of their Austrian Viceroys. Tuscany—the most peaceful and the least disaffected of the dependencies of Austria—was the first to rise and expel the Hapsburg dynasty. Her example was followed by Parma, Modena, Romagna, and the Marches. In all the revolted provinces the cry of the hour was for annexation to Sardinia. That cry was listened to favourably at Turin, and, though no direct action was taken by the Sardinian Government, yet Commissioners were unofficially despatched from Turin to undertake a sort of irregular regency in the Duchies, while a Provisional Government was organised at Bologna, under the immediate sanction of Count

Cavour. In fact, it became manifest that, if Austria were once expelled from the Peninsula, Sardinia would incorporate within her dominions not only Lombardy and Venetia, but the whole of Central Italy, while she would have it in her power at no distant date to bring about the annexation of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

Now this was a result which the Emperor of the French had never contemplated when he commenced the war. Personally, as was shown by subsequent events, Louis Napoleon entertained little jealousy of the indefinite aggrandisement of Sardinia. But, as Sovereign of France, he was bound to take into account the feelings of the French nation. There can be no doubt that the French, in as far as they entertained any sentiment at all on the subject, viewed the prospect of an united Italy with apprehension and ill-will. M. Thiers, in this respect, represented faithfully enough the sentiments of his fellow-countrymen. "The war had excited little enthusiasm in France. The victories which had attended the French arms were, of course, gratifying to the national pride; but it was obvious that, if the probable result of those victories was to be the conversion of Sardinia from the position of a humble dependent into that of a formidable and independent Power, the indifferent acquiescence with which the war had hitherto been accepted in France would be exchanged for active disapproval. Then, again, the support of the clerical party was of great value to the

Second Empire; and this support was certain to be alienated, if the war—as must be the case, supposing it to have been prosecuted much further—assumed the character of a direct attack on the Holy See.

Moreover, after the battle of Solferino, Napoleon III. had gained all he could hope to gain personally from the war. It is so much the fashion now-a-days to decry the Empire, that people are apt to forget that, at the time of its occurrence, the campaign of 1859 was regarded as a not less brilliant feat of arms than the campaign of 1866, in which Prussia defeated Austria. On the morrow of Solferino, Napoleon III. was deemed by common repute to have re-established the military ascendency of France, and to have vindicated his own claim to the succession of his great predecessor. The repute may have been ill-founded, but it sufficed to serve his purpose. To have carried on the war, and to have expelled the Austrians from Venetia, as he had from Lombardy, would have added little to the fame he had already won; while any repulse, or even any prolonged resistance, would have obliterated the memory of his past successes. No prudent commander could count absolutely upon a continuance of the uninterrupted success which had hitherto attended the French arms. The Austrians, fighting beneath the shelter of the Quadrilateral, might easily, as 1848 had shown, have proved far more formidable antagonists than they had manifested themselves in the open plains of Lombardy. The fortresses could only be captured, in all human

likelihood, after a protracted and costly siege; while, if the war was prolonged, it was well-nigh certain Austria would not be left to fight her battle alone. Throughout Germany, the desire to come to the aid of Austria was daily becoming more marked. It was only the opposition of Prussia which had hitherto restrained the Diet from passing a resolution to the effect that the cause of Austria was one which the Confederation was bound to make its own; and already Prussia had had to yield so far to the pressure of popular opinion in Germany as to propose the mobilisation of the Federal forces.

Thus, in as far as France was concerned, every consideration of prudence dictated the expediency of an early termination of the war. Indeed, looking back upon the past, the force of the arguments in favour of the Peace of Villafranca seems so decisive from the Napoleonic point of view, that it is difficult to believe the Sardinian Government to have been as much astonished at the conclusion of peace as they professed to be at the time. Be this as it may, at the very moment when the allied armies were about to advance into Venetia, and when the Sardinians had already commenced the investment of Peschiera, Napoleon III. announced his intention of proposing an armistice, with a view to the arrangement of a treaty of peace. On the 8th of July an armistice was concluded for five weeks. On the 11th, after a personal interview at Villafranca between the two Emperors, the conditions of peace were agreed upon and signed.

With their signature the war was virtually at an end.

Of the character of these conditions I shall speak later. It is enough now to say that the news of this abrupt termination of the war was received with indignation and dismay throughout Italy. When it was understood that, by the treaty in question, not only was Venetia to remain subject to Austria, but that the Quadrilateral was to be retained by the Austrians, and that the deposed Governments were to be restored in Tuscany, the Duchies, and the Legations, the Italians not unnaturally lost sight of all that had been achieved, and declared that they had been deceived and betrayed. It was all important to Sardinia to repudiate any responsibility for this compromise, and Victor Emmanuel himself need not be suspected of any insincerity in the vehemence with which he manifested his personal disapproval of the step taken by his ally. To him, as a soldier and a sovereign, the disappointment of having to arrest his victorious advance was especially bitter. I am not equally certain how far Count Cavour's passionate outburst of indignation at the Treaty of Villafranca was entirely genuine. In his position, as at once the champion of Italian independence and the negotiator of the Franco-Sardinian alliance, it was essential to his future influence that he should appear at any rate to be taken by surprise, and filled with anger at the collapse of the war. Honest and high-minded as Cavour was in the main, he was still a countryman of

Machiavelli, and was able to dissemble as well as another when it suited his purpose. It is possible, therefore, that the fury of indignation with which he received the news of Villafranca may to some extent have been simulated. If so, the dissimulation was carried to a point which almost approached genius. Victor Emmanuel was reproached with such bitterness by his Prime Minister for having acquiesced, however unwillingly, in the Treaty, that the King considered himself to have been personally offended by Cavour's language. The Count indeed went so far as to urge Victor Emmanuel to repudiate all complicity with this disgraceful compact, to refuse the cession of Lombardy, which formed part of the Treaty, and to withdraw his army within his own territory, so as to throw upon the Emperor Napoleon the sole responsibility of abandoning the cause of Italy. This advice, however, would probably not have been tendered if its author had not been convinced it would never be accepted. It was not in the power of Victor Emmanuel to refuse the cession of Lombardy, even if he had wished to do so, and he would not have been a Prince of the House of Savoy if he had so wished. Anyhow, Victor Emmanuel declined positively to accept his Minister's advice, and after a violent altercation Count Cavour gave in his resignation. In France, a quarrel in which both disputants know that in reality the other is not in earnest is called a *querelle d'Allemand*, and it is possible, after all, that

when Victor Emmanuel and Cavour fell out about the Peace of Villafranca, they may have understood each other all the while. As it happened, nothing could have better served their respective objects than this apparent rupture. Victor Emmanuel, on the one hand, was able to make it clear that he only sanctioned the Treaty against his will, in order not to desert the Lombards, who had identified themselves with his fortunes; while, on the other hand, Cavour, who knew that the agreement as to the cession of Nice and Savoy would soon have to be made public, was able to relieve himself from the imputation of having purchased the French Alliance at too dear a price.

No doubt both the King and Cavour had hoped to attain their end more promptly and more decisively. But, notwithstanding their protests against any termination of the war while the Quadrilateral remained untaken, they would both have had far less of statesmanlike power than they possessed, if they had failed to realise the full extent of what Italy had gained already, and was certain to gain in the near future, by the defeat of Austria and the liberation of Lombardy. When the first mortification occasioned by the Treaty of Villafranca had passed away, the instinct of the Italian people enabled them to appreciate how much had been done, even if much was still left undone. On his homeward progress the Emperor Napoleon was welcomed by the populations of Milan and Turin with an enthusiasm which, if it

fell far short of that which had greeted him upon his arrival, was yet not unworthy of the occasion.

Upon Count Cavour's resignation, Urban Ratazzi was selected by the King to form a Ministry, in order to carry on the Government under the new conditions created by the Treaty of Villafranca.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CONFEDERATION OF ITALY.

AMONG the many stories current about this period of Italian history, there is one which has been accepted with avidity by those who, from one motive or another, are anxious to ignore or depreciate the part played by France in the foundation of the Kingdom of Italy. According to this story, Count Cavour, in the first fervour of his indignation at the Peace of Villafranca, declared his intention of exiling himself to America, and of there making public the Secret Convention of Plombières, in order to show the world how grossly Italy had been deceived by her Imperial ally. There is little evidence to show that Cavour ever made so wild a statement in sober earnest, and there is very strong evidence to prove that, if he did make such a statement, it was not in accordance with absolute veracity. It is almost incredible that if, in 1859, the Sardinian Government had had in its possession any written document by which Napoleon III. had pledged himself to carry on the war till Italy was united and independent, that

document should not have been produced. The Peace of Villafranca was not only obnoxious in itself to Victor Emmanuel and his Ministers, but it was accompanied with possible consequences which were even more obnoxious. The Treaty signed after Solferino, besides bringing the war to an abrupt close, laid down a scheme for the permanent settlement of the Italian question, which, if it had been carried into effect, must have proved fatal to any unification of Italy under the rule of Sardinia. It was agreed between the two Emperors that Italy was to be converted into a Federation under the honorary Presidency of the Pope. The Grand Dukes of Tuscany, Parma, and Modena were to be restored to their thrones, on condition of their granting an amnesty, and entering the Federation, in which the Italian Provinces of Austria, as well as the Kingdom of Sardinia, were to be included. It was stipulated, further, that the States of the Holy See and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies were to be invited to form part of the Federal Union.

The idea of an Italian Federation died still-born, but it was not in itself an untenable solution of the Italian difficulty, and, at the time it was broached, it was one which the Government of Turin could not openly refuse to entertain. Yet this idea, if carried out, would have placed a more effectual bar on the aims and ambitions of the House of Savoy than could have been imposed by any military defeat. If, therefore, it had lain within the power of Victor

Emmanuel and Count Cavour to compel the Emperor of the French to abandon the project of an Italian Federation, by showing that he had pledged his faith to an entirely different solution, they would not have failed to make use of their advantage. As it was, they had, to the best of my belief, no such means of direct coercion. They were compelled, therefore, to frustrate the Imperial project by indirect and adroit tactics. At this crisis, the King was ostensibly deprived of the counsels of his great Minister, and if the rupture between the two was as complete as it was supposed to be at the time, the King gave proof of a subtlety of statesmanship for which the world has not given him credit.

Victor Emmanuel, having determined to accept the cession of Lombardy to Sardinia, in virtue of the Treaty of Villafranca, could not afford to repudiate this treaty, or to refuse to be bound by its stipulations. But he insisted on appending to the signature by which he ratified the Treaty the statement that he gave his signature only in respect of what concerned himself. In this way he assumed no direct responsibility for the enforcement of the various provisions of the Treaty which regulated the future status of the Duchies and the Legations. Before signing the Convention, he also stipulated that the deposed Governments in the insurgent Provinces should not be restored by any armed intervention. Having thus succeeded in keeping his own hands free, he lost no time in making

manifest his sympathy for the insurrectionary cause, and indeed in encouraging its leaders to renewed resistance.

The dismay created throughout Central Italy by the announcement that peace had been concluded, and that the exiled dynasties were to be replaced in power, was augmented when the Ratazzi Ministry ordered the Sardinian Commissioners in the Duchies to resign their functions, and to return home at once. Victor Emmanuel, however, contrived to let it be known abroad that he did not consider the game as played out. He stated in public that he still hoped to complete by himself the undertaking he had commenced, and not to leave its accomplishment to his successors. He caused an intimation to be conveyed to the Sardinian Commissioners not to obey the official orders for their recall with any unnecessary promptitude. In conversation with the Marquis Pepoli, who had been sent from Bologna as a delegate of the Revolutionary party, he offered to lend his own name as security for any pecuniary advance that might be required to meet the expenses of the Provisional Government, which had been established at Bologna upon the flight of the Papal Legate. The advice tendered to the leaders of the National movement in the insurgent provinces was to continue their preparations for resistance, and to trust, in case of need, to the House of Savoy. "You may promise the Bolognese," the King said to Pepoli, "that if the Austrians should invade the sacred soil of our country,

I will abdicate as my father did, and will come and take service as a private soldier in the ranks of the Romagnol Volunteers."

The advice thus given was followed intelligently and faithfully. The Provisional Governments continued to exercise their functions, and, thanks to the good-sense of the population, order was preserved throughout this curious interregnum. It was agreed in principle at Villafranca that the deposed Princes were to be restored, but no provision had been made for applying this principle in practice. Within their own States the Princes had no party strong enough to withstand the popular movement for annexation to Sardinia, while intervention from without was not to be allowed. So the insurgents were in reality masters of the situation, and went on their way, just as if the Treaty of Villafranca, which a few weeks later was confirmed by the Conference of Zurich, was not in existence. Perfect unity of purpose and action prevailed between the leaders of the insurrection in the various provinces. Ricasoli in Tuscany and Farini in the Romagna were the most prominent amidst these leaders, but one and all were devoted to the policy of Count Cavour, and were agreed that the sole course open to them was to promote the annexation of their respective provinces to the Kingdom of Sardinia. Assemblies were elected, plébiscites were held, and in each of the insurgent States a popular vote was recorded by overwhelming majorities in favour of annexation. Deputations

were sent to Turin to announce the results of these plébiscites, and in each case Victor Emmanuel, without either positively accepting or declining the proffered crown, pledged himself to advocate before the great Powers of Europe the cause of the provinces who desired to pass under his rule.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ANNEXATION OF CENTRAL ITALY.

THE Conference of Zurich, which met in the autumn of 1859, laid down, as I have said, a scheme for the federation of Italy, which agreed in the main with that devised at Villafranca by the Emperors of France and Austria. Napoleon III. wrote a private letter to Victor Emmanuel, urging upon him the extreme importance of adopting the principle of Federalism for Italy. To this communication the King replied that, in his judgment, the idea was impracticable, and that, whether this were so or not, he was debarred from co-operating in any scheme based upon the principle of federation by the obligations he had already assumed towards the insurgent States of Central Italy. Thereupon the French Government, which was sincerely desirous of finding some solution by which the liberation of the Peninsula from Austrian rule might be effected without any overwhelming aggrandisement of Sardinia, fell back on the notion of an European Congress. The Continental Powers, however, looked coldly

upon the proposal, as it was felt that no Congress could alter accomplished facts, and that the only certain result of such a gathering would be to give the formal sanction of Europe to the principle of the rights of nationalities, of which the Second Empire had constituted itself the champion in defiance of the treaties of Vienna. The proposal, therefore, fell to the ground, and the sole practical result of the abortive Congress scheme was to bring about a reconciliation between Cavour and Victor Emmanuel. The ex-Premier was so manifestly the one person fitted to represent the cause of Italy before an European conclave, that it would have been impossible to entrust the duty to any other Italian statesman. The King recognised this necessity, and made it a stipulation of his entertaining the idea of a Congress at all, that, if there was to be a Congress, Italy must be represented there by Cavour as her spokesman.

The negotiations, however, hung fire, and meanwhile the Central Provinces remained firm in their determination to have Victor Emmanuel for their Sovereign. Any number of suggestions were submitted to their attention. The regency of Prince de Carignan, the formation of a separate kingdom, with the second son of King Leopold of Belgium as the monarch, the creation of a sort of affiliated State under the sovereignty of a Prince of Savoy, were only a few of the solutions devised by European diplomacy. So long, however, as the Emperor of the

French remained faithful to his promise to allow no armed intervention, there was but one solution possible of the Central-Italian difficulty. The populations of the revolted provinces were resolved not to accept the restoration of the deposed dynasties except under compulsion, and compulsion being out of the question, they were free to follow their own will. If it had been a question of the Duchies alone, the issue would have been comparatively simple; but the Romagna and the Legations had deposed the Pontifical Government, and had identified their fortunes with those of the Duchies. The rights, therefore, of the Holy See were necessarily involved in any settlement of the Central-Italian controversy.

The Government of Turin had once more a very difficult game to play. On the one hand, it was necessary to prevent any disturbance of public order, and yet to avoid any overt action in the direction of annexation, under pain of compelling Napoleon III. to intervene himself, or to acquiesce in intervention by others. On the other hand, it was equally necessary to keep alive the popular desire in the Central Provinces for annexation to Sardinia, and to hold out hopes that this end would soon be attained, under pain of allowing the Republicans or the Separatists to establish some form of Government, whose establishment would retard, if not prevent, the unification of Italy under the House of Savoy. In fact, the Government of Turin had at this period to steer between the Scylla of foreign intervention and the Charybdis of

domestic disruption. Ratazzi and his colleagues—who, apart from the question of statesmanlike ability, had not had the same opportunities as Count Cavour of understanding the true policy of Napoleon III.—were less inclined than the late Prime Minister to rely on the forbearance of France, and therefore shrank from any step which might bring matters to a crisis. Cavour, on the contrary, held that the time had come when Sardinia must take some decisive action, or run the risk of losing an opportunity never likely to recur. For this purpose he insisted on the Sardinian Parliament being dissolved in order that the new provinces of the kingdom might be represented in the National Legislature. The Ministry had no objection to this proposal in itself, but they foresaw, as Cavour did also, that with the assemblage of a new Parliament, in which Lombardy was represented, the majority would insist upon the acceptance of the proffered union of the Central-Italian Provinces. From this step, or rather from its probable consequences, Ratazzi recoiled, and yet Cavour made its adoption a *sine quâ non* of his going to the European Congress as the representative of Italy. In order to bring matters to a crisis, the Ministry, believing, and with reason, that Victor Emmanuel was averse to Cavour's return to office, tendered their resignation, under the impression that it would not be accepted, and that Cavour would have to give way. To their surprise, however, the King took them at their word, and requested Cavour to form a Ministry whose

programme was to be the convocation of a new Parliament.

This sudden determination illustrates what I regard as the dominant feature of Victor Emmanuel's character, his readiness to subordinate every private consideration to the attainment of his life's object. There can be no doubt that the King's personal sentiments towards Cavour were of a very mixed character. While doing full justice to the genius of his great Minister, he resented, not altogether unnaturally, the independence of judgment, the masterfulness of disposition, and the frankness of utterance which characterised Cavour. The King's personal authority was necessarily overshadowed by the reputation of the Minister; and Victor Emmanuel was a man of far too marked an individuality to tolerate easily any relegation to a secondary place. I doubt, as I have already stated, how far the quarrel between the King and the Minister was altogether genuine. Still, there can be no question that Victor Emmanuel not unfrequently took umbrage at the ascendency of his illustrious counsellor. The King's private life, moreover, was not such as to facilitate the execution of the Minister's policy, and Cavour was not a man to bear with indifference the creation of unnecessary obstacles in his path. The whole subject of Victor Emmanuel's private character is one which it is very difficult to discuss without laying either too great or too little stress upon his personal failings. It is enough to

say here that, from a political point of view, his re-marriage with some member of the leading Royal Houses of Europe seemed at this period of Italian history to be eminently desirable. Even if this were not possible, it was a matter of public importance that the King of Sardinia, occupying the position he did before the world, should not have his name associated with any private scandal or reproach. But Victor Emmanuel, save in the solitary instance to which I have alluded, would not hear of second nuptials, and consoled himself—as indeed he had done to some extent before the Queen's death—by seeking his pleasure whenever and wherever he could find it. The Italian code of morals is not a strict one, but, according to that code, intrigues are more venial than *amours*, and somehow Victor Emmanuel's gallantries outraged the public sense of propriety in Italy more keenly than regular breaches of the Seventh Commandment. To use the words of Pepys about Charles II., "he followed his pleasures more than with good advice he would do, at least to be seen to all the world to do so." Now, neither in practice nor in theory was Cavour a rigid moralist. It was on political rather than on moral grounds that he objected to the King's looseness of life. But the objection, be its cause what it might, was one which he never hesitated to express, greatly at times to the King's annoyance.

If the truth must be spoken, the royal love-affair, which especially excited Count Cavour's disapproval,

was the one of Victor Emmanuel's many *liaisons* to which the least exception could perhaps be taken on the plea of abstract morality. For some time previous to the period of which I write, the King had formed a connection of a quasi-matrimonial character. The reigning favourite was a person of humble birth and little education ; indeed, according to the gossip of Turin, Rosina, Countess of Mirafiore, had been a flower-girl about the streets when she first attracted the attention of the King. Be this as it may, this lady obtained a lasting hold upon the affections of Victor Emmanuel, by whom she had several children. Throughout his life the King treated her with singular regard. So intimate were their relations, that the King contemplated, or was supposed to contemplate, the legitimisation of this connection by a formal marriage. Against any such idea Count Cavour set his face sternly. The King of a new country, viewed with distrust by the European Powers, and with bitter hostility by the partisans of the Papacy, could not, in Cavour's judgment, afford to outrage public opinion by raising his mistress to the place of Queen. At the period when Cavour returned to office, the rumours of the King's impending marriage with the Countess Rosina were especially rife, and it is probable that the avowed reluctance with which Victor Emmanuel contemplated the re-accession of Cavour to office, was due even more to the Minister's notorious disapproval of the King's matrimonial projects than to any disagreement on

political questions. But now, as always, Victor Emmanuel was prepared to sacrifice his personal sentiments as a man and as a king to the ambition of his life, the creation of an United Italy under the Cross of Savoy. Cavour, the King felt, was the statesman who was best able to carry through the annexation of Central Italy; and recognising this, at the risk of sacrificing his own wishes and desires, he called on the great Minister to direct once more his private as well as his public conduct.

With the return of Cavour to office, the policy of the Ministry became at once more decided. No further attempt was made to conceal the intention of the Government to bring about the annexation to Sardinia not only of the Duchies, but of the Romagna. General Fanti, the Commander-in-Chief of the volunteer forces in the insurgent provinces, was named Minister of War in the new Cabinet. Preparations were made forthwith for holding plébiscites throughout Central Italy on the question of annexation. The result of these popular votes was a foregone conclusion, and the Government of Turin made no secret of the fact that, if the answer was favourable to annexation, the offer would not be rejected.

Upon this there ensued a personal correspondence between the Pope and the King of Sardinia, in which the former appealed to the latter to forego any interference with the rights of the Holy See. Logically, Pius IX. had the best of the controversy. All the stock arguments about modern progress, the spirit of

the age, the craving for independence, the benefits of self-government, and the instinct of nationality, which are put forward with considerable force in Victor Emmanuel's letters, do not affect the point at issue, unless the person who employs them is prepared to dispute the fundamental assumption of the Papacy that all such things, whether good or evil in themselves, are unimportant compared with the welfare of the Church of God. The valid arguments, by which alone the temporal power could be logically assailed, are of a kind which Victor Emmanuel would probably not have understood, and would certainly not have used had he understood. Indeed, the noteworthy feature of the whole controversy is the almost morbid anxiety displayed by the King to avoid any open rupture with the Holy See. It is obvious that, if Pius IX. would only have consented to sanction [illegible] the Romagna, there was hardly any sacrifice the King would not have been prepared to make as the price of this concession. To incur the direct censure of the Holy Father was by no means a light matter to the son of Charles Albert. To be under the ban of excommunication was a very serious evil in his eyes, and the risk attending such a condemnation coming from such a quarter, in the next world, if not in this, was one which Victor Emmanuel could never have been induced to confront, if he could have attained his life's object in any other way. But for the attainment of this object he was prepared to confront even the thunders of the Vatican. The bull

of excommunication was finally launched against "the usurping King," but without effect; and by the end of March, 1860, Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and the Romagna were finally declared to form part of the dominions of the House of Savoy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CESSION OF NICE AND SAVOY.

THE population of the new kingdom now numbered 11,000,000. It comprised within its area the most fertile, civilised, and prosperous provinces of the Peninsula. Nor is it too much to say that nine-tenths of the intelligence, culture, and energy of Italy were to be found in the territory which henceforward acknowledged the sway of the House of Savoy. Indeed, the broad upshot of the war had been to make the kingdom of Victor Emmanuel not only the most powerful State in the Peninsula, but a State more powerful in itself than Venetia, the Papal States, and the Two Sicilies put together. Nor was any prophetic discernment required to show that the new kingdom had not yet attained its full dimensions. The position of the Peninsula, now that the Italian kingdom lay between Austria on the north and the Neapolitan Monarchy on the south, was obviously one of unstable equilibrium. It was manifest that if the National kingdom which had been called into being by the war was to endure permanently, it must of necessity absorb its neigh-

bours within its fold; and the stronger the vitality of this new State was shown to be, the more certain it became that Venetia, the provinces still left to the Holy See, and the Two Sicilies, must at no distant period become part and parcel of the Kingdom of Italy.

This contingency was viewed with extreme dissatisfaction, not only throughout the Continent, but in France itself. The events of later years have shown, as must in common fairness be confessed, that the undisguised repugnance with which the French nation regarded the consolidation of their neighbours, was not quite as unreasonable as it was deemed at the time. Whether reasonable or not, this sentiment existed, and was turned to advantage by the political opponents of the Second Empire. Legitimists, Ultramontanes, Orleanists, and Republicans agreed for once in denouncing the unification of Italy as a peril to France, and in stigmatising the late war as a Quixotic Crusade, in which French blood had been shed for objects which did not concern, even if they did not endanger, the interests of France. This cry found a ready hearing amidst the clergy and the *bourgeoisie*. Under these circumstances, Napoleon the Third had no option except to satisfy public opinion in France by insisting upon some cession of territory, as a material compensation for the sacrifices incurred in the Lombard campaign. It is admitted that in the secret Treaty, whose terms were arranged at Plombiéres, and which was finally concluded at Turin before the delaration of war with

Austria, an agreement had been made that, in the event of Sardinia's obtaining the whole of the Italian possessions of Austria as the result of the war, Savoy and Nice should be ceded to France. As, however, the Treaty of Villafranca left Austria the possession of Venetia, this stipulation was not enforced at the time. But at a later date, when the annexations in Central Italy gave Sardinia an increase of territory and population exceeding what she would have derived from the acquisition of Venetia, the demand for compensation was revived by the Emperor of the French. As a matter of argument, it would have been difficult for the Government of Turin to have repudiated the fulfilment of the agreement alluded to, and, what was more important, it would have been dangerous to do so as a matter of policy. It lay within the power of France to place an absolute veto upon the annexation of Central Italy. Without directly interfering herself, France, in order to prevent the annexation, had only to allow Austria to intervene on behalf of the deposed dynasties. The experience of the recent campaign had convinced the military authorities of Sardinia that the National forces were neither numerous nor organised enough to cope successfully, single-handed, with the Austrian armies, with the Quadrilateral at their back. An armed intervention, therefore, of Austria and Central Italy, would in all likelihood have proved fatal at this period to the National cause, and such an intervention could only be averted by securing the

continuance of French support. The choice, in fact, for Victor Emmanuel at this crisis, lay between the sacrifice of Nice and Savoy, and the surrender of all immediate prospect of creating a Kingdom of Italy. Given this choice, and there could be no doubt as to his decision.

Yet, in all the Italian nation there was probably no single individual who felt the loss of Savoy so keenly as Victor Emmanuel himself. In his tastes, his instincts, his modes of life, his habits of thought, he was more of a Savoyard than an Italian. His heart, it may be said with truth, was in his mountain home. It was there that the happiest hours of his life had been spent. Sport was the dearest pleasure of his life, and of all sport, he loved best to chase the chamois on the snow-clad Alps. Pomp and state of any kind were distasteful to him, and it was only amidst the simple, sturdy mountaineers of his Alpine provinces that he could live his own life. The glamour of the fair, fertile Italian land had but little charm for him. Art and architecture, and the traditions of the past, were not things which impressed him keenly. In the historic capitals of his new kingdom—in Florence, and Naples, and Rome herself—he was often seized with a sort of *mal de pays*, which caused him to hurry to the bare mountain heights, where he best loved to dwell. To him, too, Savoy was more than a mere hunting-ground: it was the cradle of his race, the burying-place of his forefathers, the stronghold of his warrior dynasty. In Savoy he

was a king, as he could never be elsewhere, not even in Piedmont. To the Italians he was the *Ré eletto*, the chosen monarch, because he could best aid them in the accomplishment of their independence. But if Ferdinand of Naples, or Francis of Modena, or Leopold of Tuscany had possessed the same accidents of character, fortune, and position which recommended Victor Emmanuel to the favour of his Italian fellow-countrymen, they would have been accepted with equal readiness as Kings of Italy. To the Savoyards, however, Victor Emmanuel was king, not by reason of his public or private merits—not on account of the services he had rendered, or the benefits he was expected to bestow—but because he was the chief of the House of Savoy, the heir of the soldier dukes. Beneath the varnish of Italian culture, Victor Emmanuel was at heart a Savoyard of the Savoyards. It is this fact which furnishes the clue to many inconsistencies in the character of the founder of Italian unity. And if this fact is once fully realised, there is no difficulty in understanding how acutely the King felt the sacrifice he was called upon to make in the surrender of his Alpine province.

By Cavour, however, and by the Italians generally, the cession of Savoy—even apart from the importance of the French alliance, of which it formed a price—was viewed as by no means an unmixed evil. Savoy, which had been all-important to Piedmont, was of doubtful benefit to Italy. The interests,

ideas, and views of the trans-Alpine province were inconsistent with, if not antagonistic to, those of the sub-Alpine kingdom. Had Savoy remained an integral part of Italy, it must inevitably have become a sort of Italian Ireland. Her people were alien in race to the Italians, opposed to progress (as the word was understood south of the Alps), and devoted to the Holy See. In the Italian Parliament, the deputies from Savoy would have formed a Separatist body, wedded to clerical and reactionary ideas, and powerful, out of all proportion to their numbers, by their collective union and their individual energy. The position of Nice was different, geographically, ethnologically, and politically. Nice was an integral portion of the Peninsula, and the Italians felt its loss come home to them far more keenly than that of Savoy. Unfortunately, the fate of the Nizza province excited little attention or interest abroad. With the strange obtuseness which characterises the foreign policy of England, no matter what party may be in power, the British Government of the day exerted all its efforts to hinder a cession of territory which was mutually advantageous to France and Italy, and which was not unwelcome to the population ceded. The proposed annexation of Savoy to France caused, for the time, a rupture of the Anglo-French alliance, and at a very critical moment alienated English sympathies from the cause of Italy. The cession of Nice, on the other hand, passed almost unnoticed beyond the Peninsula; and thus a real

wrong—which might easily have been averted if the European Powers, while acquiescing in the surrender of Savoy, had objected to the transfer of Nice—was perpetrated without a protest. As it was, both Savoyards and Nizzards had no choice except to submit to the inevitable. The form of a plébiscite was gone through; the cession was sanctioned, notwithstanding Garibaldi's vehement opposition, by the National Parliament of Turin; and the last tie which united the Italian kingdom to the mountain birth-place of the reigning dynasty was finally cut asunder.

Within a few weeks of the cession of Savoy, Victor Emmanuel made a triumphal progress through his new provinces. Parma, Modena, Bologna, and Florence were visited in turn. The reception of the King was brilliant beyond conception. All that popular enthusiasm, the passion of the hour, the instinct of an artistic people could do to embellish the fairest cities of the fair Italian land, was done, and done lavishly. Nothing indeed could exceed the splendour of that royal progress in the early summer-time, but of all the multitudes who assembled to greet the inauguration of the kingdom of Italy, Victor Emmanuel himself seemed the least excited. Pageants had at all times but scanty attraction for him, and even in the Arno valley, in the city of the Medicis, his thoughts, we may well assume, wandered back across the Alps to the bleak province which no longer owned him as its lord and master.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LANDING AT MARSALA.

WHEN once the provinces of Central Italy had become annexed to Sardinia, the fate of the Two Sicilies was sealed. There was not room in the Peninsula for two independent Italian kingdoms. During the last days of the Bourbon monarchy, the Neapolitan Minister of Finance, S. Manna, was sent to Turin in the forlorn hope of bringing about a reconciliation between the two Governments. On being introduced to the Chancellor of the Sardinian Exchequer, the Neapolitan envoy was greeted by his colleague with the remark, "Either you or I have got to go. There is no place for two of us in Italy." This saying expresses accurately enough the true character of the relations which existed in these latter years between the Governments of Turin and Naples. They stood in each other's way, and the instinct of self-preservation compelled each in turn to compass the other's downfall. No doubt the inevitable result might have been delayed by wiser counsels than those which found favour at the Court

of Francis II. At the time of his succession, the young King might have secured a prolongation of his reign by accepting the proposal of Count Cavour to form an offensive and defensive alliance with Piedmont. To all seeming this offer was made in good faith, though it was doubtless made also under a strong impression that it would not be entertained. Still, even if the proposed alliance had been loyally accepted and faithfully carried out on both sides, the annexation of the Southern kingdom by the Northern could only have been postponed, not averted. The time had gone by when any re-organisation of the Two Sicilies was possible under the Bourbon dynasty. The country was corrupt and demoralised to the very core. What little honesty or intelligence or energy had survived amongst the Neapolitans, long years of misrule and oppression had enlisted in the cause of an United Italy. The same influences which had already brought about the consolidation of the Northern and Central States into one kingdom, operated irresistibly to bring about the union of North and South. Francis II., short-sighted and narrow-minded as he was, was yet right in his conviction that the aggrandisement of the House of Savoy must prove fatal to his existence as an independent sovereign. His error lay in supposing that he was still powerful enough to hinder by his opposition that aggrandisement from being brought to pass.

Whatever may have been the feelings of Victor Emmanuel himself, Count Cavour was by no means

anxious to precipitate the annexation of Southern Italy. He had far too keen a political instinct not to realise the immense difficulties which—as the event has proved—must be entailed upon the new-born kingdom by the incorporation of the southern provinces under the same constitutional system with the northern. The former provinces were indeed two centuries behind the latter in social and political education; and all the most formidable embarrassments of the Italian State since its foundation have arisen from the fact that the population of the Two Sicilies, amounting as they do in numbers to not far short of one-half of the whole nation, was placed in possession of Parliamentary institutions long before they were fit for self-government. Cavour foresaw this danger, and, could he have had his own way, he would, I believe, have gladly postponed the annexation of Naples for some years, if not for another generation, supposing always that Francis II. had been willing, wittingly or unwittingly, to co-operate with Sardinia in re-organising the Two Sicilies with a view to their ultimate embodiment in an United Italy. The Court of Naples, however, clung tenaciously to the Austrian alliance, and set itself in direct opposition to the National movement. Under these circumstances, the Government of Sardinia had no choice except to precipitate the course of events. It was certain that the Bourbon dynasty could be deposed by the same agencies which had already deposed the dynasties of Parma, Modena, and Tuscany. This being so, it was

contrary to the interests of the cause personified by Victor Emmanuel to allow the overthrow of the Neapolitan monarchy to be effected without its co-operation.

At the same time, for reasons I have already explained, it was not possible for the Government of Turin to come forward openly as the assailant of the Southern Kingdom. France, in her then state of feeling, would not have consented to remain an indifferent spectator while the Sardinian armies were invading the Two Sicilies. It was necessary, therefore, that the work of annexation in the South, though organised at Turin, should be carried on without any direct or overt complicity on the part of Victor Emmanuel's Government. There is no disguising the fact, that the part played by Sardinia in the Garibaldian invasion of the Two Sicilies was not altogether open or straightforward. By a not unjust Nemesis, neither the King nor his Minister have ever obtained the credit due to them for the skill with which they brought about the annexation of the Southern Kingdom. The glory of the enterprise was monopolised by Garibaldi, and it was believed at the time, and will probably be believed hereafter, that, but for Garibaldi and his red-shirted comrades, the unity of Italy would never have been an accomplished fact. It was the interest of Sardinia, at the period when the invasion of Sicily took place, to repudiate all responsibility for the act, and to represent Garibaldi as a principal, not as an agent. Garibaldi himself honestly shared this

delusion; but the more the true history of the Neapolitan Revolution becomes known, the more it will be recognised that it was Cavour who pulled the wires and worked the puppets.

In the romance of history there are few chapters which appeal more vividly to popular imagination than that which narrates how Garibaldi, with a handful of adventurous followers, collected an expedition at Genoa, eluded the vigilance of the Sardinian cruisers, landed at Marsala, defeated the royal troops at Melazzo, crossed over to the mainland in defiance of formal orders from Turin, marched from the Straits of Messina to the Bay of Naples without having cause to strike a single blow, drove the King of Naples into flight by the mere magic of his name, and entered the capital of the Two Sicilies in triumph, while the forts commanding the city were still untaken, and the royal army was still undefeated. The Garibaldian legend will live in history; and, explain it as you will, the fact still remains that the fleets, armies, fortresses of an old and powerful monarchy proved utterly unavailing even to arrest for a moment the victorious advance of the "thousand of Marsala."

It was the fortune of the present writer to have resided at Naples during the last days of the Bourbon Monarchy and throughout the Garibaldian Dictatorship, and to have seen something of the true history of that strange episode. I have no wish to disparage in any way the merits of the brave old general—a sort of compound of Don Quixote and Sancho

Panza—who performed the chief part in that motley drama. Garibaldi may justly claim that he was the first to recognise the utter rottenness of the Neapolitan *regime*; he may assert, too, with truth, that others had failed where he succeeded. Yet, as a matter of fact, he came, saw, and conquered, not so much on account of the valour of his troops as by reason of the inaction of his opponents. With the solitary exception of the skirmish at Melazzo, Garibaldi and his followers marched from Marsala to Naples without fighting a battle or encountering an enemy. I myself have seen the Swiss regiments of the King—when mustered in force at Salerno and occupying a strong position there—withdrawn before the advance guard of the Garibaldians came in sight, though they were ready and able to have driven back into the sea a force twelve times as great as that with which Garibaldi was then marching upon Naples. I was present when Garibaldi drove almost alone into Naples in an open carriage, and passed at a foot's pace, amidst a dense surging crowd, beneath the walls of the fortress of the Lago del Castello, while the gunners in the fort stood by the loaded cannon waiting for the order to fire, which never came. The story of the collapse of the Neapolitan Government in the hour of need, would, if it were told honestly, point a moral how states fall to pieces when people, officials, ministers, and rulers are alike corrupt, degraded, and demoralised. But low as Naples had sunk, the Government would, I am convinced, have

been strong enough to withstand the onslaught of the Garibaldian invasion, if behind Garibaldi there had not stood the Kingdom of Italy. Victor Emmanuel represented the winning cause; and it was the belief that Garibaldi would, in case of need, be supported directly from Turin, as he had already been supported indirectly, which rendered his onslaught irresistible.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE GARIBALDIAN DICTATORSHIP.

THE sudden, complete, and unbroken success which had attended Garibaldi's expedition had not been anticipated at Turin. Even those who knew best the utter corruption and disorganisation of the Neapolitan State, had not calculated upon the contingency of a King abandoning his capital without striking a blow for his crown, or of an established Government, while in command of a powerful army, abdicating its functions at the approach of a handful of guerillas. The Garibaldian legend has distorted the true history of the Neapolitan Revolution. It is commonly supposed that the Bourbon dynasty was swept out of existence by a national uprising, which carried all before it. The facts hardly correspond with the theory. No doubt the reigning dynasty had lost all hold on the country; no doubt, also, the great mass of the population welcomed Garibaldi as a deliverer, and desired the success of the invasion. But of active support, Garibaldi received little or nothing from the people

he came to liberate. His forces were composed of Lombards, Genoese, Romagnoes, and a heterogeneous medley of cosmopolitan adventurers. But even at the highest point of his fortunes, the Neapolitans themselves contributed a very small contingent to the army of liberation. The Bourbon monarchy can hardly be said to have been overthrown, for the word "overthrow" implies resistance on the part of the object subverted. It may be said, with a greater degree of truth, that the monarchy collapsed. No fair-minded person can dispute the heroism of Garibaldi in undertaking his seemingly desperate enterprise. The estimate of his heroism is not, however, diminished by the fact that the enterprise proved far less arduous in itself than had been imagined beforehand.

Now it had been expected at Turin that the Neapolitans would rise *en masse* to support Garibaldi; that the royal troops would offer a determined resistance to the invaders; that civil war would ensue, and that Sardinia would then be called upon to intervene in the interest of law and order, and would ultimately render the insurrection a success by the force of her intervention. These calculations were all upset by the course of events. The Bourbon dynasty was deposed almost without a struggle; and Garibaldi, instead of receiving aid from Sardinia, found himself, after his entry into Naples, in a position to dictate terms to the Sardinian Government.

Italy owes more to Garibaldi for what he declined

doing than for what he did. Had he listened implicitly to the counsels which were pressed upon him by Mazzini and the party of action, he would have declared Naples to be a Republic, and would thereby have postponed indefinitely the accomplishment of Italian unity. He was precluded from following this advice by his native honesty of heart. But though he declined to place himself in direct opposition to the national movement in favour of an united constitutional monarchy under the House of Savoy, he was over-persuaded into an attempt to impress a semi-republican character upon this movement. Mazzini, who took up his quarters in Naples as soon as Garibaldi had assumed the Dictatorship, employed the weight of his great repute and authority to impress upon his old colleague in the Triumvirate of the Roman Republic the necessity of modifying, if not of extinguishing, the monarchical bias which characterised the policy of Sardinia under the influence of Count Cavour. The Poles, Hungarians, and exiles of all nations who had flocked to Garibaldi's standard, had other objects in view than the simple establishment of Italian unity. As partizans of the Cosmopolitan Revolution, they resented the idea that the Garibaldian campaign was to end in simply adding two new provinces to the monarchy of Savoy. Acting under these influences, Garibaldi, instead of at once proclaiming his adhesion to the Kingdom of Italy, declared himself Dictator, and refused to acknowledge the supreme authority of

Turin. To do him justice, he never regarded his own Dictatorship as anything beyond a provisionary arrangement. His friends, however, and his adherents, sought to confer upon it a more permanent character. By one of the contradictions common to human nature, Garibaldi, though himself amongst the most honest, single-minded, and loyal of mankind, chose his friends amidst men to whom any one of these epithets would be strangely misapplied. Adventurers, fanatics, and black sheep of all kinds, and of all nationalities, established themselves in authority at Naples under the prestige of Garibaldi's name. Misrule, corruption, and incompetence were rife under the Dictatorship. Conspirators from every quarter of the globe made Naples their trysting-place. Scenes were enacted there which could only be parallelled by the extravagances of the Paris Commune. Naples had had long and rich experience of all kinds of mal-administration, but in the whole of her troubled annals, the capital of the Two Sicilies was never worse administered than under the rule of Garibaldi. In no city of Europe were there greater elements of social disturbance. The partizans of the Red Republic saw their opportunity; the respectable portion of the community grew alarmed at the imminent approach of anarchy; the intervention of Sardinia was urgently demanded in the interests of society; but at the outset, intervention was an impossibility.

It must be difficult for anyone who did not live through this period to appreciate the extraordinary

prestige enjoyed by Garibaldi during the early days of his Dictatorship. The marvellous success which had attended his arms was supposed by superficial onlookers to have changed the whole condition of modern warfare. It was taken for granted that henceforward regular armies could not hold their own against volunteer levies. The occupation of Naples was popularly regarded as only the first step in a campaign which was to drive the French out of Rome, to expel the Austrians from Venetia, and then in the near future to set Hungary free, to restore the independence of Poland, and to inaugurate the triumph of Democracy throughout Europe. After what had been accomplished, nothing was deemed impossible; and even if Garibaldi himself had any doubts as to the possibility of liberating the Peninsula from foreign rule without the aid of armies or statesmen, his friends and followers had none. Acting upon their advice, he refused to decree the immediate annexation of the southern provinces to the Kingdom of Italy, demanded a two years' Dictatorship for himself, and insisted upon the summary dismissal of Count Cavour from the Ministry of Turin.

These pretensions might easily have proved fatal to the National cause. Happily, they were set at nought by the vigour and ability of Count Cavour's statesmanship. By his advice, which was accepted cordially by Victor Emmanuel, Parliament was convoked at once, and, on the proposition of the Ministry, passed a vote decreeing the immediate annexation of

the Two Sicilies. It was impossible, after this vote had been taken, for Garibaldi to ignore the authority of the Italian Parliament without placing himself in open hostility to Victor Emmanuel, a step to which he felt the greatest reluctance, and after a certain amount of hesitation, he consented to the formal annexation of Naples to the Kingdom of Italy.

In all likelihood, Garibaldi's sense of duty and patriotism would have sufficed to keep him from raising a rival standard to that of the Italian Monarchy. Even, however, if his scruples had been less acute, the force of events soon left him but little liberty of action. The plain truth is, that, with the entry of Garibaldi into Naples, the impetus which had carried him so far had exhausted itself. Francis II., animated with temporary courage by the gallantry of his youthful Queen, had made up his mind at last to make a stand at Gaëta, within whose stronghold he had taken refuge. There, and at Capua, the royal army had concentrated its scattered forces. Now it was impossible for Garibaldi to advance northwards until Capua was taken, and the resistance offered by the royal army, feeble as it was, proved sufficient to arrest effectually the progress of the invasion. The Neapolitans refused to rally to the Dictator's standard; the siege of Capua made slow and unsatisfactory progress; the volunteer army began to dwindle away and fall into disorganisation as soon as it encountered any real opposition; discontent

became rife, and Garibaldi's military position was fast becoming critical, when the Sardinian armies were set in movement, by events of which Cavour had taken advantage, in order to justify before the eyes of Europe the military occupation of the Southern Kingdom.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ANNEXATION OF THE MARCHES.

IN the early part of 1860, Pius IX. had been ill-advised enough to abandon for a time the attitude of passive resistance which constituted the real strength of the Papacy. Yielding to the representations of his Ultramontane advisers, who persuaded him that the whole of Catholic Europe was only awaiting a signal to take up arms in defence of the Church, and disregarding the prudent counsels of Cardinal Antonelli, the Pope resolved to raise a foreign army for the protection at once of his remaining territory, and for the recovery of the provinces annexed by Sardinia. This appeal for a new crusade met with a scanty response. The younger members of the French Legitimist families enlisted, indeed, in considerable numbers under the Pontifical standard. An Irish Legion, too, was raised without difficulty, but, with these exceptions, no one could be found to don the uniform of the Church militant here on earth, save a motley company of soldiers of fortune, who cared nothing for the

cause on behalf of which they took up arms, except in as far as it afforded them a prospect of free quarters and high pay. The task of organising and commanding this nondescript army was undertaken by General La Moricière, a French officer of eminence who had served with distinction in the Algerian campaigns, but who had been placed on the retired list during the Empire, owing to his opposition to the Napoleonic dynasty.

The Papal army was too numerous for mere purposes of defence. Indeed, La Moricière and his followers regarded themselves, or were at any rate regarded by their employers, in the light of champions of the Church. Their avowed mission was the overthrow of the usurping Government which had dared to set hands upon the elect of God. The native subjects of the Holy See were treated by them as enemies. The presence of these foreign soldiers only embittered the animosity between the Pope and the inhabitants of the Papal States. The provinces still under the sway of the Holy See appealed to their fellow-countrymen for liberation from an alien yoke. Disturbances took place along the frontiers of the new kingdom which were suppressed with great severity, and Rome became, for the time, the head-quarters of all the factions, influences, and interests which were opposed to the National movement. Thus the Government of Turin was enabled to represent the formation of this Papal army as a violation of the system of non-intervention in the

Peninsula, to which France had committed herself. Victor Emmanuel had, in consequence, a plausible excuse for making the counter-movement which was required, in the interest of Italian unity, in order to check the growth of Republicanism in the Two Sicilies. Almost simultaneously with the entry of Garibaldi into Naples, an ultimatum was addressed from Turin to the Vatican, calling upon the Pope to disband his army; and on the ultimatum being rejected, immediate action was taken. At this time the Emperor of the French was at Chambéry, on a visit to the newly-acquired territory of France. General Cialdini was sent to meet the Emperor, and to explain why the King's Government was unable to tolerate any longer the presence of a Papal army on Italian soil. Napoleon III. listened without comment to all the envoy had got to say, and then closed the interview with the remark, "If you strike, strike home, and strike hard." The advice was followed. Within a week of the proclamation of the Garibaldian Dictatorship at Naples, the Italian armies were on their march to invade the Papal States.

The invading army was placed under the command of General Cialdini, and at the outset was not accompanied by the King. His absence was officially ascribed to considerations of State policy, which rendered it inexpedient for him to appear in person on the scene of action. In all likelihood, however, Victor Emmanuel's personal reluctance to engage in direct warfare with the Holy See lay at the bottom

of his unwonted inaction. If the welfare of Italy demanded the sacrifice, he was prepared, indeed, to defy the wrath of the Vatican. But to encounter the risks of war when engaged in leading an attack upon the army of the Church, was a peril from which his nature, fearless as it was against mere physical danger, shrank instinctively.

The story of the campaign of Castel Fidardo may be told very briefly. On the 7th of September—that is, on the very day of Garibaldi's triumphal entry into Naples—the final summons was addressed by Count Cavour to the Vatican. On the 11th, the Sardinian troops, under the command of Generals Cialdini and Fanti, entered the Marches and Umbria. The promptitude of this attack disconcerted the Papal generals; and Albino, Pesaro, Spoleto, and Perugia were occupied in succession by the invading forces, almost without opposition. It was not till the 14th that La Moricière was in a position to assume the offensive. On that day the Papal army attacked the Sardinians at Castel Fidardo. Notwithstanding the Pope's prayers, benedictions, and promises of victory, the result was a signal, almost an ignominious defeat. The young French Legitimists who composed the regiment of the Papal Zouaves—every private in which was said to be of noble birth—fought with the hereditary gallantry of their caste and race. But the foreign mercenaries, and especially the Irish brigade, showed little heart for fighting. The odds indeed were, without doubt, heavily in favour of the

Sardinians, but the soldiers of the Holy See might reasonably have been expected to hold their own more stubbornly. As it was, a defeat was soon turned into a rout, and the Papal Commander-in-Chief only escaped capture by taking refuge in the citadel of Ancona. Upon this the Italian fleet, under Admiral Pasanò, appeared before Ancona, and commenced the bombardment of the fortress. After a sufficient resistance had been offered to satisfy military honour, the citadel surrendered on the 29th of September. General La Moricière, accompanied by his staff and by the remnant of his shattered army, was shipped on board an Italian vessel and transported back to France, where he expressed himself in no measured language concerning the misrepresentations on the strength of which he had been induced to take command of the Papal army, and on the utter collapse of the support he had been led to expect.

As soon as the invasion of the Pontifical States was an accomplished fact, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France recalled their ambassadors from Turin. This diplomatic protest, unaccompanied as it was by any active measures, was not of a character to have disturbed a far more timid Government than that of Sardinia. On the day following the surrender of Ancona, Victor Emmanuel set out to take possession of his new provinces. Everywhere, during his progress through the Marches, he was received with enthusiasm as a liberator. In all other portions of the Italian kingdom there was a more or less power-

ful minority which was in favour of the old *regimé*, but in the Papal States the deposed dynasty had no adherence whatever outside the ranks of the clergy. There were possibly worse governments in the Peninsula than that of the Holy See, but there was none so odious to its subjects, or which left behind it so heavy a legacy of animosity and ill-will.

Characteristically enough, almost the first act of Victor Emmanuel on arriving at Ancona, as King of Italy, was to visit the neighbouring shrine of Loretto, where there is to be seen the house of the Virgin, which, as tradition tells, was transported thither by angels' hands. The exigencies of his position, as the founder of an United Italy, might compel him to wage war against the Holy See, but he never forgot himself, or allowed others to forget, that he was still a true Catholic at heart.

Meanwhile, the Sardinian outposts had advanced almost within sight of the Eternal City, and Rome, in as far as any possibility of effective military resistance was concerned, lay within the grasp of the King of Italy. The presence, however, of the French garrison precluded for the time any idea of an advance on the Papal city. All roads lead to Rome, and the road by which Victor Emmanuel was to approach the historic capital of his kingdom lay through Naples and Palermo. Upon his arrival at Ancona, a proclamation was issued to the population of the Two Sicilies, making known the King's intention to proceed at once to the southern

provinces for the purpose of preserving order, and of securing a free manifestation of the popular will by means of a plébiscite. Simultaneously with the issue of this manifesto, Victor Emmanuel assumed once more, in person, the command of the National army, and, at the head of his troops, crossed the Tronto, the frontier stream which divided the kingdom of the Two Sicilies from the Papal States.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ENTRY INTO NAPLES.

THE position of Victor Emmanuel at Ancona was extremely critical. The Papal armies had indeed been crushed; the road to Naples lay open; any formidable military resistance to the advance of the invading force was out of the question; yet it was doubtful whether the mere fact of passing the narrow stream of the Tronto, which formed the frontier between the States of the Church and the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, might not undo all that had been accomplished hitherto with so much patience, courage, and good fortune. The very completeness of the Italian success in confronting and defeating La Moricière's army had excited the alarm and jealousy of Catholic Europe. With the exception of England, all the great Powers had protested against the invasion of the Papal States as an act of usurpation. The Austrian armies, encamped within the Quadilateral, were only waiting the signal to advance, and if this signal had been given, they would have had but little difficulty in occupying

Tuscany and the Romagna, and might, in all likelihood, have marched on Naples, and replaced Francis II. upon his throne. In so doing, Austria would have had the active support of Prussia, if not of Russia, and the sympathy of popular feeling in France. According to the views which then found favour with French politicians, Piedmont had already obtained more than sufficient aggrandisement by the annexation of Lombardy. For once, French Imperialists and French Liberals were in unison in deprecating the creation of an United Italy. In all the courts, too, of the Continent, a strong sentiment had been excited on behalf of the young King of the Two Sicilies, who at last had turned to bay at Gaëta in defence of his ancestral throne. All depended at this moment upon the constancy and resolution of Napoleon III. If, after the battle of Castel Fidardo, the Emperor of the French had declared that he was determined to uphold the arrangement contemplated by the treaty of Villafranca against Piedmont as well as against Austria, and that the annexation of Central Italy and the occupation of the Papal States must be set aside, the newly-cemented fabric of Italian unity must of necessity have been overthrown. Most potent influences, clerical as well as diplomatic, were set in action at the Tuileries to induce Napoleon III. to place a veto on any further aggrandisement of the Italian kingdom. Whether these influences would prevail or not, was, during the days that

followed the occupation of Ancona, a matter of uncertainty.

The overt action of the French Government at this period was distinctly hostile to the cause represented by Victor Emmanuel. The ambassador of France had been recalled from Turin; the French troops in Rome had received orders to occupy Viterbo and other places adjacent to the Papal city in the name of the Holy See. The admiral commanding the French fleet in Italian waters had refused to recognise the blockade of Messina and Gaëta, on the plea that these places, as occupied by Neapolitan troops, still formed part of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Against these overt acts of hostility the Government of Turin had nothing to set, beyond their own private conviction that Napoleon III. was friendly at heart to the cause of Italy. As I have said before, I do not believe any positive binding engagements, with regard to an enlargement of territory not included within the limits of the treaty of Villafranca, had ever been concluded between the Emperor of the French and his late ally. Even if such engagements existed, it was always easy to evade them on one plea or the other, and the foreign policy of the Second Empire was always too tortuous for any absolute confidence to be felt at Turin as to the sincerity of the imperial professions.

Under these circumstances, it was, to say the least, upon the cards that the passage of the Tronto by

the Italian armies might exhaust the sorely tried forbearance of France, and might cause Napoleon III. to acquiesce, if not to participate in, an Austrian intervention. It was at this crisis that Count Cavour displayed his consummate ability, by taking advantage of the revolutionary character assumed by the Garibaldian dictatorship to represent the annexation of the Two Sicilies as essential to hinder the establishment of a Republic in Naples, and the consequent triumph of the cosmopolitan democracy. Still, the highest diplomatic ability is powerless against the stern logic of accomplished facts, and if the passage of the Tronto had been followed, as then seemed a probable contingency, by an Austrian intervention undertaken with the connivance of France, the creation of an United Italian kingdom, under the House of Savoy, would have had to be indefinitely postponed, if not finally abandoned.

Thus everything turned upon the personal resolution of Victor Emmanuel. The combination which the genius of Cavour had brought to pass would have fallen to pieces if the King had shrunk from the risk involved in passing the Tronto, and had elected to retain the provinces already added to his crown, even if, by so doing, he had to abandon the dream of an United Italy. But of Victor Emmanuel it would never be said that he "feared his fate too much;" when the time came, he was ready to "put it to the touch, and win or lose it all." Whither his star led, there he followed, and almost as soon as Ancona

had capitulated, the Italian armies crossed the Tronto with the King at their head. On his entry upon Neapolitan soil, Victor Emmanuel issued a proclamation, which is too long to give here, but which deserves studying, as being, of all State papers issued under his name, the one which may most fairly be considered his own defence of his policy, not only before the Neapolitans to whom it was addressed, but before the world at large.

The march from the Adriatic to the Bay of Naples was attended with little or no incident. Everywhere the King was received with acclamations, and the only obstacles his troops had to surmount were those presented by the badness of the roads. Throughout the journey, His Majesty was accompanied by S. di Vicenzi, who has left an interesting record of his conversations with the King. Victor Emmanuel was not much given to talk, and had little of the gift of conversation. Of his sayings there are not many that have been treasured up, or will bear repeating. Indeed war, sport, and women were the only subjects in which he felt a strong personal interest, and even about these subjects, action was more in his way than talking. Whatever he said was shrewd and sensible, but the shrewdness and the sense were those of the doer and not of the thinker. There is little in the comments of the King, as narrated by Di Vicenzi, which rises above the level of ordinary common sense. Some light, however, is thrown upon the King's own life, by certain remarks which he is stated to have

made during this journey concerning Ferdinand II. After asking whether the late King of Naples had not been a friend of the Jesuits, Victor Emmanuel added, in a sort of soliloquy, "But are you sure that his weakness of mind, in yielding to the suggestions of these gentry, was not the real cause of his errors? I can tell you that I myself had need of great force of character to resist similar suggestions. Without an iron will and a firm purpose, I should never have succeeded; but what struggles I had to undergo! If I had had less fortitude of mind, and a less profound feeling of the obligations my conscience imposed upon me, what would have become of me, and of my country? May it not then be that Ferdinand II. erred, not from badness of heart, but from weakness of character, which rendered him unable to withstand certain hurtful influences. Anyhow, he deserves to be pitied, because he did not know how to promote his own welfare, nor that of his country."

When the King reached Capua, he was met by Garibaldi. The interview was brief and cordial on both sides, but to the Dictator it must inevitably have been mortifying, and to the King embarrassing. The grace of Garibaldi's abdication was marred by the fact that in a great measure it had been forced upon him; while Victor Emmanuel could not but feel that his dignity, alike as a king and a soldier, was in some degree impaired by his having to receive the crown of the Two Sicilies from the hands of a subject

and an insurgent. The fortress of Capua, which had withstood the desultory siege laid to it by the Garibaldian volunteers, captiulated on the approach of the Italian troops.

On the 7th of November, Victor Emmanuel entered Naples in state, and drove through the city in an open carriage, with Garibaldi seated by his side. It was the King, and not the General, who was the hero of the hour, and the object of popular adulation. Within four-and-twenty hours of the Royal entry, Garibaldi quitted the scene of his short-lived Dictatorship. Alone and almost unnoticed, he sailed away at daybreak to his island home, having refused all the honours and rewards which the Government of Turin would have been only too glad to shower upon him. No act in his Dictatorship became him better than the dignified silence with which he laid down his power. The only condition for which he stipulated was, that the Italian officers of his volunteer force should have their ranks confirmed to them in the Royal army. For himself, he asked nothing, and accepted nothing.

The sojourn of Victor Emmanuel in Naples was of short duration. His presence as King in the capital of the Two Sicilies was attended with considerable embarrassment, owing to the fact that Francis II. was still fighting for the throne at Gaëta, while the adherents of Garibaldi looked upon him as an interloper. After a hasty visit to Sicily, the King returned to Turin before the end of the year.

After his departure, the siege of Gaëta was undertaken in due form by General Cialdini. The French Government had sent its fleet to protect Gaëta from an attack by sea; the siege, therefore, had to be prolonged till the Sardinian army had erected land batteries with which to bombard the fortress, which is situated on a narrow spit of rock jutting out into the Mediterranean. As soon, however, as these batteries were completed, and as it became clear that the French were prepared to allow the bombardment from the shore to commence in earnest, the fortress capitulated, and the young King and Queen took their departure for Rome. With the fall of Gaëta the war was at an end. The fortresses of Messina and Civitella del Tronto surrendered in their turn, and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies became part and parcel of the Italian monarchy.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE DEATH OF CAVOUR.

THE year 1861 opened full of promise for the Italian cause. For the first time since the downfall of the Roman Empire, a real kingdom of Italy had come into existence. Out of twenty-six millions of Italians, twenty-two were citizens of the new kingdom, and were represented in the Parliament which assembled at Turin in the month of February. Henceforward, there was not only one king in Italy, but only one court in the whole peninsula. The difficulties inseparable from the reorganisation of the Southern provinces had hardly yet made themselves manifest. The enthusiasm created by the war of liberation was still unexhausted; and the satisfaction entertained by the Italians, at feeling they were once more a nation, kept down for the time all elements of discord. To a superficial observer, at the period of which I write, it might well have appeared that the unity of Italy was now an accomplished fact, and that such work as still remained to be done towards

its full completion might safely be left to settle itself.

This view, however, was not shared by those who could look below the surface. No doubt, the structure of Italian unity, viewed from without, appeared to be well-nigh completed, but viewed from within, its foundations seemed strangely insecure. So long as Venetia was occupied by Austrian armies, and Rome was garrisoned by French troops, the condition of Italy — to use a mathematical metaphor—was one of unstable equilibrium. The two questions of Venice and Rome, though closely connected with each other, were governed by entirely different considerations. The former, from a military and material point of view, was of far the most pressing importance. Italy could enjoy no permanent security from invasion while the Austrians continued to occupy a network of almost impregnable fortresses in the very heart of the Peninsula. It was not in human nature that Austria should not desire to recover the provinces she had lost, and so long as she retained possession of the Quadrilateral, contingencies might easily occur which would render such recovery easy of accomplishment. In order to understand the conditions of the problem with which the founders of the Italian kingdom had to deal, it is essential never to lose sight of the plain fact that, from the battle of Novara down to that of Custozza, Austria was always more than a match for Italy, provided the

latter was left to her own resources. At any time between 1859 and 1866, Austria could, and probably would, have reconquered her old position in the Peninsula, if she could have been sure of being left to fight out the battle single-handed. Moreover, apart from the actual danger of invasion, to which Italy was exposed by the presence of Austrian armies on her soil, the unification of the country was fatally impeded by the strain which the necessity of maintaining a standing army out of all proportion to her wants imposed upon her resources, and by the encouragement which the Separatist parties in the newly-annexed provinces derived from the close proximity of the Austrian garrisons. To get Austria out of the Quadrilateral was therefore the primary object of the Government of Turin. Both Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour were fully alive to the fact, that to drive Austria out of the Peninsula was beyond the power of Italy by herself. They were aware, too, that for such an enterprise the aid of France could not be relied upon. It was then that, with the foresight of genius, Cavour conceived his project of making use of Prussia to complete the work of Italian unification. In 1861, the very idea of a united fatherland under the rule of Berlin was regarded by the statesmen and diplomatists of Europe as an idle dream. The keenness, however, of his political instinct led Cavour to perceive that Prussia was the coming Power, and determined him to seek her alliance against Austria;

which from different causes was alike an obstacle to the unification of Italy and Germany.

The Roman question, though of less urgent importance than the Venetian from a military point of view, was, politically speaking, of a far more complicated character. The presence of a French army of occupation at Rome did not indeed in itself constitute a military danger for Italy, similar to that created by the Austrian occupation of the Quadrilateral; but the mere fact that a French garrison remained at Rome deprived Italy of the link necessary for the completion of her unity. An intimate knowledge of the Peninsula is required in order to realise fully the hold that Rome had and has upon the Italian mind. Between the various provinces of the new kingdom, and especially between north and south, there existed all sorts of rival interests, jealousies, and antagonisms. Naples and Palermo, if governed from Turin, or even from Florence, would have to be ruled as subject provinces. But north and south, east and west, all men of Italian birth and language were willing to recognise the supremacy of Rome. In fact, an United Italy was only possible with Rome for her capital; and yet, so long as the French troops remained in the Papal city, all approach to Rome was barred to the Italians. To solve the Roman question by force, as the Garibaldian party proposed, was a sheer impossibility. Italy had not the power to expel the French from Rome; and even if she had the power, she could not venture to convert France into an open enemy so

long as the Austrians were encamped within the Quadrilateral. Moreover, behind France there was the Catholic world, whom Italy could even less risk to offend. The arguments in favour of preserving Rome as the capital of the Papacy were far stronger than Englishmen not acquainted with the sentiments of Catholic nations are apt to realise. Cavour himself, in a debate on this subject before the Italian Parliament, admitted openly that it was only the peculiar geographical and historical position of Rome which could justify the Italians in vindicating their claim to their own capital. If, he observed, the Holy See had happened to have fixed its abode at Taranto, or some other outlying portion of Italian soil, no amount of abstract argument could have sufficed to justify an Italian annexation of the Papal State. It was because, and only because, Rome was essential to the existence of an United Italy, that the Italians could ask Europe to acquiesce in the overthrow of the temporal sovereignty of the Papacy. According to Cavour's view, Rome was to become the capital of Italy, with the acquiescence, if not with the approval, of the Holy See. The establishment of a *modus vivendi* between Church and State was, in his judgment, to be effected by the application of his favourite theory, *Chiesa libera in Stato libero.* But to carry out this theory in practice, the first step was to secure the willing consent of France to the withdrawal of the French garrison from Rome. With this view, he called upon the Parliament to place on

record a solemn declaration, to the effect that Rome must be the capital of the united kingdom; he then proceeded to negotiate with the Emperor Napoleon, for the purpose of concluding an arrangement by which the French garrison was to be withdrawn, and the duty of protecting the independence of the Papacy was to be undertaken by the Italian Government.

In the negotiations with both Berlin and Paris, Victor Emmanuel took an active, though not the leading part. How fully he realised the ideas of his great Minister is shown by the fact that, when he was left alone to carry on by himself the work of completing the union of Italy, he always based his foreign policy on the lines laid down by Cavour. It is significant of the odd contrast between Victor Emmanuel's character as a sovereign and as a man, that at the very moment when he was adopting as his own the policy by virtue of which he ultimately succeeded in expelling the Austrians from the Peninsula, and in obtaining Rome as the capital of his kingdom, he was unfavourably disposed on private and personal grounds towards the author and founder of this very policy. As soon as the new Parliament had met, Count Cavour tendered his resignation, on the plea that the altered conditions of the country required a new administration. Strange as it may seem, the King hesitated for some time as to whether he should not confer the reconstruction of the Ministry to other hands than those of the statesman by whom Central Italy and the two Sicilies had been added to his

dominions. The cause of this hesitation there is strong reason to believe was the annoyance felt by the King at the Minister's remonstrances on the subject of his relations with the Countess Mirafiore, to which allusion has been already made.

The hesitation, however, was abandoned as soon as the King realised the truth that Cavour's leadership was essential to the fulfilment of Sardinia's mission as the liberator of the Peninsula. Strong as his private passions and prejudices may have been, Victor Emmanuel always subordinated them to the one object of his life's ambition. To know what you want is the secret of all success, and no one ever realised more fully what it was he wanted than the first King of Italy. When the question of his title was raised at this period, his Ministers recommended that he should be called Victor Emmanuel and nothing else; but this suggestion he met with a point blank refusal. It was not as the new King of a new kingdom, but as the heir and descendant of the Dukes of Savoy, that he intended to reign over the Peninsula. His title as King of Sardinia was Victor Emmanuel II., and by that title, and by no other, he was determined to be known as King of Italy. His objection to any change in his title was not based alone upon his pride of race, but was due to the shrewd instinct which taught him that the Kingdom of Italy, if it was to have a lasting life, must be based on the foundation of the old Piedmontese monarchy.

The reign of Victor Emmanuel as the first King of Italy had only been counted by weeks, when, in the full tide of his success and energy and vigour, Count Cavour sickened and died. No greater loss was ever sustained by country or by monarch. In the presence of such a calamity all personal considerations were laid aside, and Victor Emmanuel himself gave vent to a passionate outburst of grief little in accordance with his habitual self-control. Of the last interview between the King and the dying Minister no trustworthy record has ever been published. It was reported currently in Turin at the time, that Cavour, upon his death-bed, had sought and obtained a promise from the King not to carry out the matrimonial designs which had been a subject of dispute between them. Be this as it may, the King was deeply agitated when he returned from the interview, at which he had bidden a last farewell to the Minister who had served their common country so faithfully and so successfully. All that could be done to honour the memory of the great Italian statesman was done both by the nation and by the King. Amidst a people's mourning he was buried, not, as Victor Emmanuel had proposed, in the Royal sepulchre of the House of Savoy, but in the quiet graveyard at Santena, hard by the abode of his own family. Cavour's part in the drama of Italian unification was played out, and henceforward Victor Emmanuel went on his way to the end alone.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ASPROMONTE.

UPON Cavour's death, Baron Ricasoli, the chief of the Tuscan nobility, and the life-long champion of the national cause in Central Italy, was appointed Prime Minister. The profound feeling of sympathy excited throughout Europe, at the loss sustained by Italy in the person of her most illustrious statesman, at the very moment when the unity of the nation had become an accomplished fact, afforded France, and the other Continental Powers who wished well to the cause heretofore personified by Cavour, an opportunity of receding gracefully from the attitude of hostility they had assumed upon the invasion of the Papal States. Napoleon III. led the way by officially recognising the new kingdom, and his example was speedily followed by Russia, Prussia, and the minor Powers. In the confidential instructions which were sent at this period to the agent of the Italian Court at Paris, the King expressed his own opinion as to the policy of his Government with singular frankness. "I have not," he wrote, "changed in any way my point of

view about the Roman difficulty. It is a question of time. I do not desire to go to Rome at present, or even for some time to come. I am perfectly well aware that France, as things are, cannot act otherwise than she does, and I remain constant to my conviction that the solution of the Venetian question, in whatever way it may be settled, must precede that of Rome."

In fact, if Victor Emmanuel could have had entirely his own way, the Roman question would for the time have been relegated entirely to the background. If once the Austrians were dislodged from the Quadrilateral, Italy must perforce, sooner or later, become the possessor of Rome; whereas the possession of Rome by itself, even if it was feasible, must always remain insecure so long as the Austrian armies were encamped in Venetia. What the King, therefore, proposed to himself was, to devote the energies of the nation to the consolidation of the new kingdom, to the development of its material resources, and, above all, to the reorganisation of the army, so that Italy, as a military Power, might become mistress of her own destinies. "My aim," to quote his own words, "is to Italianise Piedmont and to Piedmontise the army." In order to carry out such a policy as this, it was necessary to secure an interval of tranquillity, and to divert the attention of the country from external to internal affairs. The construction of railways throughout the Southern provinces, the assimilation of the various codes of law hitherto

existing in the different States, the removal of all the material and moral barriers which up to the present had divided the Peninsula into a conglomeration of heterogeneous communities, were, in fact, the main objects pursued by Baron Ricasoli, at the King's instance, during the year that followed Count Cavour's death.

Unfortunately, parliamentary government forms a bad agency for carrying out a work of political reconstruction, unless the Minister at the head of public affairs can either command the support of a party united and powerful enough to defy all opposition, or unless he has an individual personality so potent as to enable him to be virtually independent of political support. Neither of these conditions was forthcoming in the present instance. Italy had no lack of politicians of high ability, but she had none, now Cavour was gone, who could impose his will upon the Parliament by the sheer force of his own character. Nor was there any political party, in our English sense of the word, with a distinct policy of its own on which a Ministry could rely for support. With the exception of a few clericals and reactionists, too few in numbers and too insignificant in influence to form a party, the Chambers consisted of a heterogeneous mass of politicians who were all partisans of an United Italy, and who were all, as a body, candidates for office. The Conservative element was weakened most materially by the loss of Savoy, while the annexation of the Neapolitan provinces had

flooded the Chambers with a voluble, excitable contingent, imbued, in as far as they had any distinct political ideas, with Democratic theories, and deriving their inspiration from Mazzini and Garibaldi. Thus the dominant question of the day, from a parliamentary point of view, was necessarily that of the policy to be pursued with reference to Rome.

All parties were agreed that Rome must be the capital of the new kingdom, but as to the means by which this consummation could best be effected, there was a wide divergence of opinion: Cavour had always declared that Rome must be annexed by diplomacy and not by force of arms. The so-called "party of action," of which Garibaldi was the hero, held that Rome must be occupied by force, even at the risk of a war with France. Closely connected with this question of Rome was the subsidiary one of the Garibaldian army, which had been organised during the Revolutionary War in the South, and which had not been disbanded upon the conclusion of the campaign. Naturally enough, there existed great jealousy between the regular army and the irregular contingents, while the personal sympathies of Victor Emmanuel, as a soldier and as a sovereign, were all enlisted in favour of the former. But, as usual, he was prepared to subordinate his private sentiments to the consolidation of his kingdom, and it was mainly due to his personal influence that the Garibaldian volunteers who wished to remain under

arms were incorporated with the regular troops upon terms of perfect equality.

Meanwhile, Baron Ricasoli, who never got on well with Victor Emmanuel personally, and who had little tact in the management of parliamentary tactics, resigned office after a few months' tenure of power. He was succeeded by Ratazzi, the ablest of Cavour's rivals, and who, as a Piedmontese, was personally acceptable to the King, while his advanced views made him less obnoxious to "the party of action" than most of the school of constitutional monarchists to which he belonged. Ratazzi, however, had only just succeeded in settling the difficult question of the Garibaldian army, when news reached Turin that Garibaldi himself had once more taken the lead of the national movement into his own hands. Leaving Caprera with a handful of followers, the ex-Dictator had landed near Reggio, in the Straits of Messina, and had proclaimed his intention of marching upon Rome at the head of the levies he hoped to recruit in his progress throughout the Southern provinces. With characteristic simplicity of mind he imagined that he could repeat against the Papacy, supported by the military power of France, the tactics by which he had overthrown the monarchy of the Two Sicilies, and that he could do this with the connivance, if not with the open approval, of the National Government. It is difficult to understand how Garibaldi could ever have seriously imagined that the King of Italy either could or would permit an insurrectionary war to

be waged within his own dominions against an allied and friendly Power. Still, it is more pleasing to credit Garibaldi with an utter want of political intelligence, than to assume that, of his own free will and purpose, he deliberately provoked a civil war on Italian soil.

The Government of Turin had, under the circumstances, no option except to act at once and decisively. If the Garibaldian army had been allowed to advance on Rome, it would not only—as Mentana proved at a later date—have courted certain and disastrous defeat, but the advance, in all human likelihood, would have led to a French occupation of Neapolitan territory, which would have eventuated in the disruption of the Italian kingdom, if not in the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy at Naples.

There was no room for hesitation, and Victor Emmanuel was not the man to tolerate with equanimity any defiance of his royal authority. General Cialdini was despatched to Calabria with instructions to put a stop at once to this insurrectionary movement. The experience of the second Garibaldian invasion of the Two Sicilies showed how materially the first had been indebted for its success to the fact that Garibaldi had had Sardinia at his back. Left to his own unassisted resources, his expedition ended in a complete fiasco. No enthusiasm was displayed in his behalf by the Neapolitans. No recruits flocked to his standard, and before he had advanced many miles inland from the coast, he encountered the Italian troops under Cialdini. To the

last, Garibaldi seems to have remained under a delusion that the King's Government would not really oppose his advance; otherwise, it is incredible that for a mere point of honour he would actually have gone to the length of civil war. As it was, the Garibaldians were put to flight, after a brief and half-hearted resistance, and their leader was wounded and taken prisoner.

The news of Aspromonte created the most intense excitement throughout the Peninsula. Logically, it was unjust to hold the Ministry responsible for a catastrophe which was none of their own seeking. Popular sentiment, however, is seldom logical, and no weight of argument could reconcile the Italians to the fact that the Liberator of the Two Sicilies should have been shot down like a brigand, on the soil of the country he had set free, by the troops of the King whom, barely a year ago, he himself had placed upon the throne of Naples. Now that Garibaldi was a prisoner, the reaction in his favour was so great that Ratazzi had to resign. To find a successor was a work of great difficulty. After the premiership had been offered to and refused by S. Pasolini and S. Cassinis, and only accepted by Farini to be laid down again almost as soon as it had been assumed, owing to his mind giving way beneath the strain, S. Minghetti undertook the ungrateful task of carrying on the King's Government. The unpopularity attaching to the Ministry extended to the Sovereign, and for the first and last time in his career, the abdication

of Victor Emmanuel was demanded by the organs of the popular party, as the best solution of the difficulties with which Italy was surrounded. In moments of depression Victor Emmanuel might talk to his intimates of his desire to lay down a burden that he felt to be too heavy for him, but in reality nothing was further from his practical thoughts than any idea of abdication. Speaking at the time to a Southern deputy who had demanded an interview, in order to assure his Majesty that the outcry for his abdication, which had been raised in Naples, was not approved by the great mass of the population of the Two Sicilies, the King pointed through the windows to Monviso, one of the mountains which overhang the city of Turin, and remarked, "Monviso may abandon its post, but I shall remain fixed in mine." On this occasion, at any rate, there is no reason to doubt the absolute sincerity of the royal speaker.

Shortly after Aspromonte, the King's second daughter, the Princess Pia, was married to the young King of Portugal. The marriage was welcome to Victor Emmanuel, not only on personal grounds, but as a recognition of the royal status accorded by the Courts of Europe to the new kingdom of Italy.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE SEPTEMBER CONVENTION.

THE passions excited throughout the Peninsula by the affair of Aspromonte, rendered it a matter of vital importance to the King's Government to take action of some kind, which would convince the country that they, notwithstanding their opposition to the Garibaldian movement, were determined to complete the unification of Italy. Inaction on their part would have seemed to justify the violent solution which Garibaldi had attempted to carry through at the risk of civil war. Moreover, Victor Emmanuel himself had no idea of resting upon his laurels. In a private letter addressed in March, 1863, to S. Minghetti, the then Prime Minister, the King wrote, "You know that to complete the glory of Italy is the dream of my life and the end and aim of all my aspirations."

As I have already mentioned, Victor Emmanuel's private conviction was that the question of Venice must necessarily be solved before that of Rome. The moment, however, was not propitious for

reopening a conflict between Italy and Austria. Overtures had been made, not long before this date, to the British Government by the Court of Turin, with the view of inducing England to assist Italy actively in obtaining possession of Venetia. Our Government, however, consistently with the policy that England pursued throughout in regard to Italy, was not prepared to do more than exert moral influence—an influence which, however potent in theory, is powerless in fact. France was occupied with her ill-fated intervention in Mexico; and Prussia, on whom Italy had mainly relied, had of late shown a tendency to espouse the cause of Austria. At this period the Schleswig-Holstein question had monopolised the attention of Germany, and Count Bismarck, then in the height of his dispute with the Parliament of Berlin, had already conceived the idea of the Austro-Prussian campaign in the Duchies, which was destined to pave the way for the unification of Germany under the House of Hohenzollern.

Under these circumstances, it was idle for Italy to think of reopening the Venetian question. If anything was to be done for the moment, it must be on the Tiber, not on the Po. The French occupation of Rome had become a source of extreme embarrassment to France as well as to Italy, now that the reduced territory of the Holy See formed a mere *enclave*, surrounded not by a series of disjointed and unaggressive States, but by an united and powerful kingdom. Difficulties were constantly arising,

owing to the fact that the Papal city, under the protection of France, had become the head-quarters of all the factions opposed to the unity of Italy, and especially of the brigands, who carried on a sort of desultory guerilla warfare in the Southern provinces. The negotiations, therefore, for a provisional settlement of the Roman question, which had been cut short by Count Cavour's death, were renewed between Paris and Turin.

The result of these negotiations was the so-called September Convention. No one of the measures adopted by the Government of Victor Emmanuel, in order to facilitate the unification of Italy, was more misrepresented at the time, or tested more severely the popularity of the monarchy. Though this was unjust, it was not altogether to be wondered at. The September Convention, in plain English, was not what it professed to be. In reality, it was an arrangement by which Italy was to be secured the ultimate possession of Rome; ostensibly, it was an arrangement by which Italy was to guarantee the possession of Rome to the Papacy. By this Convention it was agreed that, after the lapse of two years, the French troops were to be withdrawn from Rome, and that upon their departure the Italian Government was to pledge itself to defend the frontiers of the Papal States against any armed invasion. What was the real character of the understanding embodied in the September Convention, is shown by a statement made at this period by the French Minister of Foreign

Affairs to the Italian Ambassador at Paris. "Of course," he said, "the result of all this must be that you will end by going to Rome yourselves. But it is essential that between your entry into Rome and its evacuation by our troops a sufficient interval of time should elapse, and such a series of events should take place, as to hinder the possibility of establishing any direct connection between the two incidents, or of France being held responsible for the catastrophe." The true significance of the Convention was fully recognised at the Vatican, where the announcement of its conclusion was received with the utmost consternation; but the "party of action" in Italy denounced the Convention as a formal surrender of Italy's right to Rome, and as a proof that the Government of Turin was prepared to sacrifice the cause of Italian unity to the exigencies of France.

Moreover, to add to the difficulties of the position, the French Government made it a *sine quâ non* of their accepted convention, that Italy should remove her capital from Turin. The reason of this stipulation being insisted upon was obvious enough. In order to reconcile public opinion in France to the abandonment of the French protectorate over Rome, it was necessary to create a belief that Italy, on her part, had consented to forego, or at anyrate to postpone, all idea of having Rome for her capital. Now the Parliament of Turin had voted a formal resolution, to the effect that Rome must be the capital of the new kingdom. If, therefore, the

proposed evacuation of Rome by the French troops was not to be regarded as a mere expedient for enabling Italy to annex the Papal city, it was essential that some steps should be taken, calculated to show that, on the part of Italy, there was no immediate idea or purpose of acting upon this resolution. No step could be better adapted for such an object than the transfer of the capital from Turin to some more central site; a transfer which was not likely to be seriously contemplated, if the Government of Turin anticipated being in possession of Rome within any reasonable interval of time. In other words, the capital had to be removed from Turin, in order to give colour to the impression that Italy had made up her mind to reconstruct her kingdom without Rome for her capital.

The policy of the September Convention may not unfairly be criticised as not being of a straightforward character. But whatever opinion may be formed on this point, it is certain that Victor Emmanuel himself seldom gave a greater proof of his life-long resolve to subordinate every other consideration to the creation of an United Italy, than when he agreed to purchase the consent of France to the September Convention at the price of sanctioning the removal of the capital from Turin to Florence. When the proposal was first mooted, the King could hardly listen to it with patience. "I am," he said, "a Turinese born and bred. Nobody can understand the pain caused me by the bare thought of having to desert the city

where I have so many ties, where there is so deep a loyalty towards my family, and where there are the graves of my father and of all I have loved best on earth; but if it cannot be otherwise, I am ready to make even this sacrifice to the welfare of Italy."

The Convention was signed by the King in September, 1864, and General La Marmora was appointed to succeed Minghetti as Prime Minister, under the impression that, being himself a Piedmontese of the Piedmontese, he would be better able to reconcile his fellow-countrymen to the transfer of the capital. France would have preferred to have had Naples selected as the new metropolis, but this proposal, which had much to recommend it in itself, was frustrated by the shrewd common sense of Victor Emmanuel. "If," he remarked to his Ministers, "we go to Florence, we can leave it for Rome whenever we choose; but if we once go to Naples, we have got to stop there." So Florence was finally selected as the seat of the Italian Government.

The announcement of the proposed transfer was received with extreme dissatisfaction at Turin. The Piedmontese, in common with all other Italians, were prepared to recognise the supremacy of Rome; but they regarded the preference shown to Florence as an insult to their pride, as well as an injury to their interests. This dissatisfaction was embittered by the outcry of the Garibaldian party, who de-

nounced the Convention as an act of treason to the nation. The result was that popular demonstrations took place at Turin, which were directed not only against the Government, but against the King in person. These demonstrations gave great umbrage to Victor Emmanuel, who quitted Turin suddenly, in extreme displeasure, and betook himself to Florence. The enthusiastic reception he encountered at the new capital of his kingdom, did not suffice to remove the impression created by the hostile manifestations at Turin. Indeed, throughout the whole of his career, he seems to have taken few public events so much to heart as his quarrel with the city of Turin. The misunderstanding, however, between the King and the town he loved so well was of short duration. As soon as he had definitely established the seat of his Government on the Arno, he came back to the sub-Alpine city, where alone amidst all the royal residences of the Peninsula he felt himself at home, and amidst his own people. By this time, the good sense of the Piedmontese had led them to do full justice to the considerations which had forced their King to desert them for strangers. From that day to the end of his life, there was no break in the affection which existed between Turin and the King, who, in his own words, was *proprio torinese.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PRUSSO-ITALIAN ALLIANCE.

IN the closing days of 1865 the Italian Parliament assembled for the first time in Florence. The financial embarrassments, arising out of the enormous expenditure necessitated by the reorganisation of the new kingdom, had assumed serious proportions, and the Government resolved to make a determined effort to stop the constantly increasing deficits. Reductions were made in all official salaries, and it was suggested by the Ministry to Victor Emmanuel that it would be well for him to set an example of the necessity of sacrificing individual interests to the public need by consenting to a reduction of the Civil List. In itself the proposal could not have been otherwise than distasteful to the King. Throughout his life, money was always scarce with him. The claims upon his purse, both as a sovereign and as a private individual, were exceptionally heavy, and his merits and his failings alike indisposed him to any curtailment of his expenditure, or to any endeavour to restrict his liberality within his means.

In his veins there ran the blood of the soldier-dukes of Savoy, and to the end there was about Victor Emmanuel, constitutional Sovereign though he was, something of the free-lance and the *condottiere*. Yet, notwithstanding his own pecuniary difficulties, he was ready to sacrifice his personal convenience, as he was ready to sacrifice things far dearer to him, when the interests of his life's mission were at stake. On the suggestion above alluded to being made, the King volunteered to reduce his Civil List by one-fifth, at a cost to himself of over a hundred thousand pounds a-year. It would be absurd to describe this act as one of entirely disinterested self-sacrifice, but the readiness with which it was made throws light upon the single-heartedness of purpose which constituted the dominant characteristic of Victor Emmanuel's career.

The key-stone of the scheme by which S. Sella, the then Minister of Finance, designed to fill up the deficit of the National Budget, consisted in a proposal to impose a tax on flour—a tax which would have directly affected the great masses of the population, who had hitherto remained exempt from any direct taxation. The proposal was violently opposed by the Southern deputies, who held that such a tax would excite disaffection amidst the Neapolitans; and their opposition was supported, from party motives, by the adherents of Garibaldi and by the clericals. The Budget Bill was rejected, and the Ministry gave in their resignation.

At this time, Victor Emmanuel was suffering severely under a personal sorrow. Prince Otho, the youngest son of the King, died in his twentieth year, after a long and painful illness. The poor lad had been a cripple and an invalid from his childhood, and for him an early death was no unmixed calamity. But his father felt the blow cruelly. There was something in the helpless plight of the deformed Prince which appealed strongly to the softer side of a nature not over-prone to sentiment; and, of all his children, the youngest and weakest came nearest to his father's heart. Years after the Prince's death—so the legend of Rome runs—a hump-backed beggar-boy who hung about the Pincio hill used to be the special object of the King's charity. Whenever, in his promenade through the terrace-gardens which overhang the Eternal City, the King passed the spot where the crippled lad lay crouching in the sun, he used to give him money. Upon one of his aides-de-camp telling His Majesty that the boy, from what he had learned, was not a deserving object of charity, the answer which Victor Emmanuel gave was, "It is very likely you may be right, but he reminds me of my Otho."

But no matter who died or fell out by the way, Victor Emmanuel held on to his life's purpose. At any other period of his career, the King, in accordance with his constitutional tenets, would have accepted the resignation of the Ministry after their defeat in Parliament, and would have called upon the Opposition to form

a Government. For the policy, however, he had in view at this moment, General La Marmora's presence at the head of the Ministry was well-nigh essential; the King therefore requested the General, as a personal favour, not to resign, but to form a new cabinet, to drop the tax on flour, and to go on with the negotiations which were then being carried on between Berlin and Florence. These negotiations were finally crowned with success in April, 1866, by the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance between Prussia and Italy. The relations between Prussia and Austria, in respect of the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies, were at this time so strained, that the alliance in question was justly regarded at Vienna as being directed against the supremacy of the Hapsburg monarchy in the Fatherland. Overtures in consequence were made from Vienna to Florence, through the agency of France, to the effect that Austria was prepared to cede Venetia, if Italy would withdraw from her alliance with Prussia. Victor Emmanuel, however, refused positively to entertain any overtures of the kind. "He had," he said, "given his word, and that was enough." His instincts as a soldier and as a sovereign made any such breach of faith as that suggested personally repugnant to him. Yet it is reasonable to suppose that his determination to abide by his plighted word was strengthened by a conviction, that it was better for Italy to obtain Venetia after a campaign in which he was to have the support of

Prussia, than to achieve the same object by a private arrangement of which the credit would accrue to France.

Be this as it may, the overtures of the Court of Vienna were rejected, and forthwith the Austrians began to mass their troops within the Quadrilateral. This step was regarded, or at any rate represented, by Italy as a menace, and war became imminent. As usual, England made an attempt to avert the impending conflict by a Congress, and, as usual, the attempt proved a failure. On the 18th June, the Austrian troops crossed the frontier of Prussian Silesia, and on the 20th, Italy declared war against Austria.

General La Marmora took command of the Italian army under the King, and resigned the premiership; he was succeeded by Baron Ricasoli. On the 21st of June, Victor Emmanuel left Florence for the field of battle, after having issued a proclamation expressing the sanguine hope of a speedy and decisive victory.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE BATTLE OF CUSTOZZA.

THE rapid and crushing defeat which Austria sustained at the hands of Prussia during the Seven Days' Campaign, upset all the calculations of European statesmanship. Nowhere, however, was the intelligence of the unbroken success of the Prussian armies received with more surprise, and it may be added with more disappointment, than in Italy. The whole plan of the Italian campaign had been based upon the assumption that the contest between the two great Teutonic States would prove a not unequal one, and that during its fluctuating vicissitudes Italy would prove more than a match for any force Austria could spare for the defence of her trans-Alpine provinces. Both calculations proved erroneous. On the 18th of June the Prussians had their first engagement with the Austrians; and on 4th July, after a series of defeats, in each of which they had suffered heavily, the Austrian armies were finally routed at Sadowa. Vienna lay at the mercy of the invading force; Hungary was on the eve of rebellion, and the war was virtually at an end.

South of the Alps, however, the fortunes of war had favoured the Austrians. According to the original plan of the campaign, the main army commanded by Victor Emmanuel in person was to have invested the Quadrilateral, and thus kept the Austrians engaged; while a second army, under the command of General Cialdini, was to have crossed the Po at Ferrara, and to have cut off communication between Venice and Verona. It was on this second *corps d'armée* that the brunt of the battle was expected to fall. The plan was based on the belief that the Austrians would remain on the defensive within the Quadrilateral. The assumption, however, was upset, owing to the bold strategy of the Archduke Albert, the Austrian commander-in-chief. On the 24th June, on the very eve of the day when Cialdini was to have crossed the Po, the Austrians advanced from their positions round about Verona, and proceeded to drive in the outposts of the Italian army. The challenge was accepted, and the engagement became general; the Austrians, with the fortresses at their back, had the stronger position of the two combatants, and their troops fought with a steadiness and determination which the Italians did not display. The Sardinian regiments indeed fought with their wonted courage, but the newly incorporated regiments from the Central and Southern provinces could not stand the onslaught of trained and highly disciplined troops. At the close of the day the Italian armies retained the ground they held in the morning, but were not in a position to renew the

combat with any chance of success. The magnitude of the defeat of Custozza is naturally explained away as much as possible in all Italian narratives of the campaign. But the broad fact remains, that after the battle of Custozza had been fought and lost, the whole plan of the campaign was suddenly changed; orders were sent from head-quarters to General Cialdini to postpone any attempt to enter Venetian territory, and it was determined to remain entirely on the defensive, till the shattered forces of the main army had been recruited and reorganised. The Italians have no cause to be ashamed of the defeat of Custozza, but the result of the battle indicates the justice of the conclusions on which Cavour and Victor Emmanuel based their policy for the emancipation of Italy: the first of these conclusions was, that from a military point of view the Italians could not hold their own against the Austrians single-handed; the second was, that the alliance of foreign Powers was absolutely essential to secure the deliverance of the Peninsula from Austrian rule.

Whether, if the Italians had had time to reorganise their forces, they might have retrieved their defeat, must always remain an open question; time, however, was not allowed them. The victory of Custozza was well-nigh the solitary gleam of triumph which brightened the reverses of the Austrian Empire in 1866. Almost within a week of the Archduke Albert's success, the fortunes of Austria made shipwreck on the field of Sadowa. Immediately

after that overwhelming disaster, the Emperor Francis Joseph besought Napoleon III. to mediate on his behalf; and in order to facilitate the mediation of the Tuileries, by the removal of the Italian question from the field of controversy, Venetia was ceded by Austria to France, and was offered by her in her turn to Italy.

Welcome as this cession was in itself, the mode in which it was effected was calculated to wound the susceptibilities of a young and high-spirited nation smarting under a sense of defeat. The idea that the war was to end without Italy having a chance of vindicating her tarnished repute created the utmost indignation throughout the Peninsula. Moreover, the offer, in the form in which it was first made, was one which the Italian Government were unable to accept formally. Though it was obvious that the war north of the Alps was virtually over, yet Prussia was still pouring troops into Austrian territory, and acting as if she was prepared to advance upon Vienna. At such a moment, Italy could not have concluded peace without laying herself open to a charge of disloyalty. The proffered cession of Venetia was neither accepted nor refused, and there ensued a sort of informal suspension of hostilities, which was neither war nor peace. Fresh disappointments were still in store for Italy. On the 20th July, the Italian ironclad squadron was defeated, and almost destroyed, off the island of Lissa, in the Adriatic, by an Austrian fleet composed of old-

fashioned wooden vessels; and on the day following, Prussia concluded a treaty of peace with Austria at Nikolsburg, by which Italy's acceptance of the terms previously offered her through the Emperor Napoleon was taken for granted.

Thus the abrupt termination of the Seven Days' Campaign left Italy in a position of singular difficulty. Nominally, she was still at war with a Power at whose hands she had sustained a signal defeat both by land and sea, and whose armies were encamped on her soil within an impregnable line of fortresses. Now that Prussia had gained her own ends, her zeal for the Italian cause had grown cold, while France was naturally annoyed at the reluctance displayed by the Italian Government to accept her mediation. If Austria had chosen to retract the proposed cession of Venetia, or even to resume hostile operations, it is difficult to see how Italy could have prevented her from carrying out her purpose. Victor Emmanuel at once recognised the truth, that the only way of escaping from an untenable position was to close with the Austrian proposal, even at the risk of wounding the pride of his own people. Taking upon himself the sole responsibility of an unpopular action, he sent envoys to the Austrian camp to treat for peace, and then appealed to the Ministry to ratify the engagements into which he had entered. The King's authority carried the day; and on the 17th August an armistice was signed between the Austrian and Italian armies.

The Court of Vienna was not in a mood to haggle about the precise terms of the Convention, by which Venetia was to be finally surrendered to Italy. Indeed, nothing in all her long connection with the Peninsula became Austria better than the frankness with which, when once she had made up her mind to cede the territory for which she had fought so often and so bravely, she consented without discussion to the steps which were deemed necessary to complete the cession.

As soon as the transfer of Venetia had been formally ratified by the treaty of peace signed on 3rd October, 1866, a plébiscite was held in the Venetian provinces, which, as usual, resulted in a well-nigh unanimous vote in favour of annexation to the kingdom of Italy. In the following month Victor Emmanuel made a triumphal entry into the City of the Lagoons, and was received with an enthusiasm which even the conditions under which the Queen of the Adriatic had been handed over to Italy failed to diminish.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

MENTANA.

WITH the withdrawal of Austria from the Peninsula, and the surrender of the Quadrilateral, the unity of Italy was well-nigh completed. Moreover, this triumph of the national cause coincided with the departure of the French troops from Rome, in accordance with the much-abused September Convention. At the time when the treaty was concluded, the "party of action" in Italy lost no opportunity of declaring that France had no intention of fulfilling her engagements, or of recalling her troops from the Eternal City. Upon the exact date, however, specified in the Convention, Napoleon III. recalled the army of occupation, which had been quartered in Rome for close upon twenty years. When this was done, no portion of Italian soil was occupied by foreign soldiery, a thing which had been unknown for centuries in the Peninsula. The aspiration which formed the chorus of the famous Garibaldian Hymn, "*Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori stranier*," had at last been realised. Notwithstanding this, the September Convention, it

is only fair to admit, left the Papal question unsettled. The Pope still ruled as temporal sovereign over a State which, though small in extent, was situated in the very heart of Italy, and included the historic city which all Italians claimed as their rightful capital. Yet by the terms of the Convention, Italy was bound not only not to invade the Papal territory herself, but not to allow any such invasion to take place.

No doubt, to any intelligent observer it was clear enough that the engagement in question was in its nature transitory, and that, if Italy succeeded in consolidating herself into an united and powerful kingdom, the force of events must of necessity bring about the absorption of the Papal State into the great country by which it was surrounded. A nation, however, keenly agitated by political and theological passions, cannot be expected to form a calm and intelligent judgment as to the course of future events; and the broad fact which took hold of the popular mind was that, though the French troops had actually quitted Rome, the Italians were still precluded from taking possession of their capital. The policy of the Government was one which could not be explained distinctly. It was impossible for the Ministry to say openly, "If we only remain quiet, we shall infallibly end by annexing the Papal dominions;" because such an avowal would have led to the immediate reoccupation of Rome by French troops. They had, therefore, to bear in silence the reproach that they had given up the idea of claiming Rome as

the capital, and to leave the justification of their policy to the future.

Moreover, two antagonistic forces combined together to frustrate the Fabian policy of the King's Government. The Vatican perceived clearly that, if the September Convention was carried out without opposition, the inevitable result must be to bring about at no distant date the incorporation of Rome into the Italian kingdom. In order, therefore, to thwart the policy of Florence, the Papal Government did everything in its power to excite popular sentiment against the compromise by which Rome was left, for the time being, under the sovereignty of the Holy See. A foreign force was raised abroad, chiefly in France, Belgium, and Ireland, for the defence of the Church Militant. The capital and its adjacent territory were subjected to every form of vexatious oppression that priestly ingenuity could devise. All direct communication between the Papal dominions and the kingdom of Italy was rigidly interdicted. Indirectly, however, communications were constantly exchanged between the Romans and their fellow-countrymen; and the universal burden of the Roman complaint was, that their plight was too cruel to be endured any longer, and that they were being sacrificed to a faint-hearted policy which was letting slip a golden opportunity for settling the Papal question by one bold stroke for once and for ever.

These appeals found a ready hearing amongst the

Italian people. The Ministry grew unpopular, and their unpopularity was taken advantage of by the "party of action" for its own purposes; every act of the administration was represented as dictated by unworthy deference to the Court of the Tuileries and the Vatican. Finally, in the spring of 1867, a Government bill for a sale of Church lands was thrown out by a coalition between the Radicals and the Clericals. Baron Ricasoli resigned, and S. Ratazzi took office as Premier of a Ministry in which the "party of action" was strongly represented.

Ratazzi was undoubtedly a man of high ability; but his ability was that of the politician, not of the statesman. The exact narrative of the chapter of Italian history which ended in Mentana has never yet been made public. But there seems little reason to doubt that Ratazzi conceived, or at any rate accepted, the idea of obtaining Rome for Italy by tactics similar to those by which his great predecessor had made Italy mistress of the Two Sicilies. A tacit understanding of some kind was entered into between the Prime Minister and Garibaldi, by which the latter undertook to invade the Papal States at the head of a volunteer force, with the connivance of the Government. Whether this understanding ever took the form of a definite compact is open to question. But it is certain that the Ratazzi Government did nothing to oppose, if it did not actually encourage, the action by which Garibaldi took the settlement of the Roman question into his own hands. Volunteers were openly

enlisted throughout the Peninsula for the almost avowed object of an attack on Rome, yet no serious attempt was made by the Government to discourage these enlistments.

Possibly, if Garibaldi had acted with more secrecy and greater promptitude, his advance on Rome might have proved successful. As it was, the volunteers collected in force along the Papal frontiers, with an almost ostentatious avowal of the purpose for which they had taken up arms, and Garibaldi sailed from Caprera in order to take command of the insurgent force. Delay proved fatal to the enterprise. The Emperor Napoleon, who would probably have been willing enough to accept the annexation of Rome to Italy as an accomplished fact, could not afford to allow the annexation to take place with his direct complicity. While the volunteers were massed upon the Papal frontiers, awaiting the order to advance, the French Government suddenly announced its intention of despatching an expedition from Toulon for the protection of the Holy See. Ratazzi had believed that France would protest, but would not act. This miscalculation upset all his plans. By order of the Italian Government, Garibaldi was arrested at Azina Lunga, a small town on the Tuscan frontier, but was allowed to return to Caprera. It was hoped at Florence that this action would have sufficed to induce the Emperor of the French to countermand the departure of the French contingent for Rome. But the hope proved fallacious. Ratazzi

resigned. Extreme difficulty was found in appointing his successor. Popular feeling was so excited in Italy, that any Ministry which undertook the ungrateful task of putting down by force the volunteer movement was certain to be sacrificed to the passions of the hour. Thus, at the very moment when a foreign army was reoccupying Italian soil, Italy was left without a Government. Once more Victor Emmanuel appealed in person to his Ministers and to his people. General Menabrea accepted the post of Premier, and the King issued an address to the country in his own name, stating that his Government could not, and would not, tolerate any attempt on the part of a faction to settle the Roman question by violent means. In words not unworthy of the speaker and the occasion, the King recalled his people to a sense of their duty. "Intrusted," he wrote, "as I am with the right of peace and war, I can permit no usurpation of my trust; I demand therefore with confidence that the voice of reason should make itself heard, and that the Italian citizens who have violated my authority as their sovereign should retire behind the lines of my army. The perils which anarchy and rash counsels must of necessity entail upon us, can only be averted by upholding firmly the authority of the Government and the inviolability of the Law."

The appeal, in as far as the nation was concerned, was not made in vain. Garibaldi, however, and his adherents refused to listen to reason. The Italian

army crossed the Papal frontier for the purpose of maintaining order; but the volunteers under Garibaldi, who had again made good his escape from Caprera, advanced upon Rome, under an insane delusion that the French would not really oppose their advance if it came to fighting. The delusion was dispelled only too quickly. At Mentana the French regiments encountered the Garibaldian levies, and inflicted upon them an overwhelming and bloody defeat. On the morrow of Mentana, the Italian troops had to be withdrawn from the Papal territory, in obedience to the imperative demands of France. The French troops once more took up their quarters permanently in the Eternal City, and the temporal sovereignty of the Holy See seemed to have acquired a new prolongation of its existence under the protection of French bayonets.

The net result of the Garibaldian attempt to bring about a violent solution of the Papal question had thus been to inflict a grave humiliation on the country, to cause a foreign occupation of Italian soil, and to frustrate the policy of the September Convention, by which Italy was on the eve of obtaining possession of her chosen capital. Yet, not unnaturally, the sympathies of the nation were with the insurgents, not with the Government. The folly, not to say the guilt, of the abortive rising which had ended so disastrously, was forgotten in consideration of the fact that the Italians who had fallen at Mentana had died fighting for Italy.

Garibaldi, though his arrest by the Government of Florence was acknowledged to be a necessity, remained even more than heretofore the idol of the Italian people. Moreover, the resentment occasioned by the easy defeat of the volunteers at Mentana was intensified by an accidental circumstance. In the despatch in which the French commander, General de Failly, narrated the story of the battle, he congratulated his Government upon the fact that Mentana had afforded an opportunity for testing the new Chassepôt gun, and that the experiment had proved a signal success. Even those Italians who disapproved most strongly of the Garibaldian insurrection, still felt it a personal outrage to be told, in an official French despatch, that fellow-countrymen of their own, fighting for the cause of their common fatherland, had been used as targets on which to test the efficacy of a new weapon. Indeed, of all the causes which contributed to estrange the sympathies of Italy from the country to which, after all, she owed her liberation, none, perhaps, were more potent than the ill-advised comments of the French general as to the success of the Chassepôt guns at Mentana.

In this feeling of indignation Victor Emmanuel shared to the full. At his request the Marquis Pepoli, who was closely connected, both by birth and friendship, with the Bonaparte dynasty, wrote a letter to Napoleon III., pointing out the difficulties of the King's position. On reading over this letter before its final despatch, Victor Emmanuel exclaimed,

"What? You have said nothing about the Chassepôts. Why, these Chassepôts have given a mortal blow to my heart as father and as King. It seems to me as if the bullets had pierced my own breast. Of all the griefs I have known in my life, this affair of the Chassepôts counts amidst the gravest." In obedience to the King's wishes, the letter was remodelled, and the following phrase was added :—"Recent events have extinguished every recollection of gratitude in Italian hearts. An alliance with France is no longer within the power of the Government. The Chassepôt gun has dealt that alliance a mortal blow."

Indeed, between Victor Emmanuel and the Italians there was always a perfect understanding. They knew that their triumphs were his triumphs, and their shame his shame also. Thus it came to pass that, notwithstanding the unpopularity which attached to the policy of the Ministry, the King, by whom that policy had been originated and upheld, still retained his hold on the affections and confidence of his people.

CHAPTER XL.

THE ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL.

THE three years which elapsed between Mentana and Sedan occupied no very important space in the history of Italian unification. For the time, the "party of action" was crushed by the collapse of the Garibaldian invasion of the Papal States. The French were once more permanently established in Rome as the protectors of the Holy See; and there was nothing for Italy to do, except to watch the course of events and to bide her time. Political instinct told the Italians that a war between France and Germany could not long be averted, and that, whenever the war broke out, it must necessitate the final settlement of the Roman question. Owing to this conviction, the reoccupation of Italian soil by a foreign army was borne, after the first flush of irritation had passed away, with less impatience than might have been anticipated. The Government, on its side, was not inactive. From 1867 to 1869, prolonged negotiations took place between Paris, Florence, and Vienna. A project was formed for the

conclusion of a Secret Triple Alliance between France, Austria, and Italy. In virtue of this alliance, the three Powers were to have bound themselves to defend each other against any attack from without, or, in plainer words, from Prussia. Italy, however, refused to join the proposed league, except on the condition that the French troops should be withdrawn from Rome, that the September Convention should be re-established, and that both France and Austria should enter into an engagement not to undertake or sanction any further armed intervention in the affairs of the Peninsula. The projected alliance, the idea of which was suggested by Count Beust, was warmly supported by Victor Emmanuel, and was at the outset regarded favourably by the Emperor of the French. But after long hesitation, Napoleon III. could not make up his mind to encounter the outcry which was certain to have been raised, both by the Clerical party and by the Opposition in France, if the French troops had been withdrawn from Rome. The scheme fell through. Had it been carried into execution, the Franco-German war might never have taken place, or might well have been attended with different results. It is a curious instance of the shrewdness of vision with which Victor Emmanuel foresaw the questions likely to excite the passions of the Italian nation in the near future, that in this abortive treaty he stipulated that Italy, on the conclusion of any war in which she might become involved owing to the Triple Alliance, should be

guaranteed a rectification of her frontier in the Tyrol and a port in Tunis.

The King's attention at this period of his life was mainly devoted to family affairs. In May, 1867, Prince Amadeus married the Princess Maria della Cisterna, the heiress of one of the wealthiest and most distinguished of the Piedmontese nobility. Within a year, the Crown Prince Humbert married his cousin, the Princess Margerita. The marriage was one especially gratifying to the King. He had been devotedly attached to his only brother, the Duke of Genoa. But after the Duke's premature death, at the age of thirty-three, the Duchess had contracted a left-handed marriage, at which Victor Emmanuel had taken grave umbrage. It is characteristic of the man that, being himself excessively lax in his domestic relations, he expected the strictest regard to propriety from the women of his family; and that, being personally averse to pomp and etiquette, or restrictions of any kind on his freedom to live out his own life after his own fashion, he yet had a deep sense of what was due by his kinsfolk to the name they bore, and to the rank they held. The second marriage, therefore, of the Duchess of Genoa had caused a complete severance of her connection with the Court. But when the marriage between his son and a daughter of his brother was suggested to him, and when he learned that by character, as well as by birth, the Princess was a true daughter of the House of Savoy, he did all in his power to

bring about an union, which was all the more welcome to him from the fact that it restored his old friendly relations with his brother's family.

Not long after Prince Humbert's marriage, Spain was the scene of a revolution, which led to the deposition and exile of Queen Isabella. Spanish affairs are always unintelligible to the outer world; and of all *Cosas de España* there is none about which less is known than the real history of the revolution which, after many strange vicissitudes, ended in placing the Prince of the Asturias upon his mother's throne. It is certain, however, that from the outset Marshal Prim, who was the principal leader of the insurrection, contemplated the establishment of a new dynasty in Spain under the House of Savoy. With this view, overtures were made from Madrid to the Government of Florence. The Italian Ministry looked coldly on the proposal when it was submitted to them. They recognised the difficulties which, as the event proved afterwards, must attend any attempt to make a foreigner sovereign of Spain, and they failed to see any advantage to Italy arising out of the scheme commensurate to the risk involved. Victor Emmanuel, however, took up the idea very warmly. To have his son King of Spain would, he contended, strengthen the cause of constitutional monarchy in Europe, add to the influence of Italy, and, above all, confer fresh lustre on the House of Savoy. To all objections on the score of danger, his reply was that the Princes of his race had never shrunk from peril when, by incurring

it, they could add to their power or possessions; and that, according to his view, his sons owed it to themselves, and to their family, not to forego any opportunity of advancing the interests of their house. For the time, however, the difficulties attending the realisation of Prim's policy proved insuperable, and the scheme of making an Italian Prince King of Spain was postponed indefinitely. Had it been carried out in the first instance, the Hohenzollern candidature could never have been brought forward; and the outbreak of the Franco-German war might have been delayed, if not averted.

Soon after the abortive negotiations concerning Prince Amadeus' candidature, Victor Emmanuel was seized with one of the violent attacks of fever to which he was constitutionally subject. For some days his life was thought to be in imminent peril. The King believed himself to be dying, and sent for a priest, in order to receive the last sacraments. After hearing the royal confession, the priest refused to give the King absolution, unless he consented to redeem the scandal of his private life by marrying the Countess Mirafiore, with whom he had lived for many years as his mistress. As I have before stated, Victor Emmanuel had at one time entertained the idea of legitimatising his union with the Countess, and had only refrained from so doing in obedience to Cavour's urgent remonstrances. Possibly, therefore, the stipulation imposed upon him by his confessor as the price of his receiving absolution was not

altogether unwelcome. Anyhow, he consented to it, and when he lay, as it was supposed, on his death-bed, the marriage service was performed between him and the Countess. According to the Canon law, the marriage was legally binding; though, as by the law of Italy civil marriages are obligatory, the union was not valid in itself. Whether the King ever intended to complete the marriage by going through the legal form is uncertain; at any rate, the formality was never executed, and the Countess Mirafiore, though she was his wedded wife in the eyes of the Church, was never legally married. In the *Almanac de Gotha*, the King of Italy was subsequently described as married morganatically to Rosina, Countess Mirafiore. A morganatic marriage, however, it need hardly be said, did not give the King's wife the rank of Queen; and in consequence Victor Emmanuel remained faithful to the letter, if not to the spirit, of the promise he was understood to have given Count Cavour at their last interview.

The scandal of his private life being thus satisfactorily removed, the confessor next demanded that the King should make atonement for the sins of his public life, by declaring his solemn retraction of all the offences he had committed against the Holy See. But to every suggestion of this kind the King returned a point blank refusal. After his own fashion, Victor Emmanuel was a devout believer; and the idea of dying without the absolution of the

Church had especial terrors for a man of his tone of mind. But—to reverse the saying attributed to a well-known English convert to the Church of Rome—the King was an Italian first, and a Catholic afterwards. To retract his acts against the Holy See was to imperil the fortunes of the Italian kingdom as well as of his own dynasty; and this was a sacrifice that he was not prepared to make, even for the sake of averting the terrors of Hell. To the exhortations of his confessor he replied, "I am a Christian and a Catholic, and I die as I have lived. If I have wronged anyone, I regret sincerely of my wrong-doing, and implore God's forgiveness. But the declaration you demand from me is a political act, and in my character of a Constitutional King I cannot perform any such act without the consent of my responsible Ministers. Go into the next room. There you will find the President of the Council; come to an understanding with him; he will answer you." The priest sought an interview with the Prime Minister, General Menabrea, who threatened him with immediate arrest if he violated the laws of the kingdom by abusing his spiritual authority. The confessor gave way; the King received absolution; and, curiously enough, the agitation caused by this incident brought about a crisis which enabled him to rally from the prostration of the fever. Sceptics, indeed, asserted that the cause of his recovery had nothing to do with the administration of the sacraments, but was due to a bottle of port wine which

was given to the King by his valet after the doctors had given up the case as hopeless.

Be this as it may, the King speedily recovered, and seemed to enter upon a fresh lease of life. Shortly after his recovery, the Italian Government was called upon to deal with the question of the Œcumenical Council upon which Pius IX. had set his heart. The Governments of France and Austria were disposed to interfere in the deliberations of the Council, and to forbid the presence at it of the bishops of their respective States, unless these bishops were instructed to oppose the dogma of Papal Infallibility. Italy, however, refused to listen to any suggestion of the kind. According to Cavour's adage of the *Chiesa libera in Stato libero*, the Church was perfectly entitled to pronounce judgment upon any question of spiritual dogma. The question, therefore, whether the Pope was or was not infallible was a question for the Church, and the Church alone, to determine. In accordance with this view, the Italian bishops were allowed to go to Rome without any restrictions to their perfect freedom of action being imposed upon them by the Italian Government. The example thus set by Italy was followed by the other Catholic Powers.

CHAPTER XLI.

ROME THE CAPITAL.

MEANWHILE, the great war was at hand which was destined indirectly to complete the unification of Italy. By the early summer of 1870, it had become manifest that peace between France and Germany could not long be preserved. The Government of Berlin had resolved on forcing France into war, and the French nation were eager for the conflict. The Emperor Napoleon would gladly have remained at peace, but the pressure of circumstances was too strong for him. In view of the impending war, the negotiations to which I have alluded were resumed with the object of forming a triple alliance between Italy, France, and Austria. The Italian Government, however, declined to entertain any proposition of the kind unless the French troops were recalled at once from Rome; and this concession the French Government felt unable to make, even on the very eve of the war with Germany. In the hope of preserving the peace of Europe, Victor Emmanuel, at the eleventh hour, gave his consent to

the acceptance of the Spanish throne by Prince Amadeus, in order to remove the cause of strife occasioned by the Hohenzollern candidature. But as soon as one ground of quarrel was removed another sprung up; and on the 19th July, 1870, France formally declared war against Prussia. The issue of the first battles in this memorable campaign was awaited with almost as keen anxiety in the Peninsula as in the countries actually engaged in hostilities, for it was felt that the fortunes of Italy could not fail to be materially affected by the result of the war. The sympathies of the Italian nation were pretty equally divided. On the one hand, Italy was biassed in favour of France by feelings of race and kinship, by her hereditary dislike to the *Tedeschi*, and by her sense of the obligations she owed, not so much to France as to the Napoleonic dynasty. On the other hand, these sentiments were counterbalanced by the conviction that the defeat of France must involve the abandonment to Italy of her chosen capital. Victor Emmanuel, as an Italian, shared probably the opinions of his fellow-countrymen, and doubtless held the view that the best thing for Italy would be such a defeat of France at the outset of the campaign as would render it compulsory upon her to purchase the active alliance of Italy by the cession of Rome; but as a sovereign, still more as a soldier, Victor Emmanuel felt himself to be under a special duty towards the Power which had come forward as the champion of Italy in 1859, and whose armies

had fought side by side with those of Sardinia at Solferino and Magenta. When war, therefore, was declared between France and Germany, Victor Emmanuel proposed to send an Italian army to the assistance of the former Power. The Ministry, however, refused to adopt this proposition, and tendered their resignations in the event of the King's persisting in his purpose. Thereupon, after a show of resistance, which was probably sincere, even if not very determined, Victor Emmanuel gave way, and the Italian Government formally declared its intention of remaining neutral during the Franco-German war.

From the outset, fortune declared itself against the arms of France. On the 4th August, the French sustained a crushing defeat at Weissenberg, which was followed up, two days later, by an even more disastrous repulse at Froschwieller. The French had, in consequence, to retire behind their frontiers, and the true magnitude of the campaign was realised for the first time at Paris. The French army of occupation was recalled in hot haste from Rome, and on the morrow of Froschwieller, the possession of the Eternal City was offered to Italy, through the medium of Prince Napoleon, as the price of her military assistance. The offer came too late. By this time it was obvious that the defeat of France was a certainty; and it would have been impolitic for Italy to have allied her fortunes with those of a fallen cause, and thereby to have incurred the enmity of Germany. Prince

Napoleon's proposals were courteously declined, and France was left alone to fight out a losing battle to the end.

Defeat after defeat fell upon the French arms, and in the first days of September there ensued the capitulation of Sedan, which led to the downfall of the Empire. It is stated, and doubtless with truth, that Victor Emmanuel was deeply agitated when he received the tidings of the disaster which had befallen his Imperial ally. But the Savoyard element, which is always to be traced in the King's character, displayed itself in the comment with which he is recorded to have greeted the news of the catastrophe of Sedan and the capture of Napoleon III. "Only to think," he exclaimed, "that that worthy man would always insist on giving me advice." The kind of tutelage arrogated by the Tuileries over the Italian Court after the Franco-Italian campaign was probably even more distasteful to the head of the House of Savoy than the patronage of France was to the Italian people. Victor Emmanuel would have been untrue to the traditions of his race, if his genuine regret at the misfortunes of Napoleon III. had not been tempered by a sense of satisfaction at his being henceforth relieved from a sort of protectorate which could not but have been deeply galling to his personal pride.

On the 6th September, the French Republic signalised its accession to power by the famous declaration of the Government of National Defence,

that France would under no circumstances cede a single foot of French soil. On the following day, the Italian Government declared its intention of marching upon Rome. Popular feeling throughout the Peninsula had declared in favour of the immediate occupation of the capital. Even if no such pressure had been applied, Victor Emmanuel had far too keen a political instinct not to be aware that, apart from any military considerations, the moment when the attention of Europe was monopolised by the Franco-German war was exceptionally favourable for a settlement of the Papal question, in the interest of Italy, without incurring any risk of foreign intervention. A final effort was made, both officially by the Italian Government and privately by the King, to obtain the consent of the Pope to the occupation of the Eternal City. Pius IX., however, refused to the last to hear of any compromise, and remained faithful to his belief that Rome would still be preserved to the Holy See by some Divine interposition. On the 11th September, the Italian armies, under General Cadorna, crossed the Papal frontier. On the 16th they occupied Civita Vecchia, and on the 20th they arrived under the walls of Rome. Count Arnim, the Minister of Prussia at the Vatican—who had already begun to display that strong bias in favour of the Papacy which ultimately proved fatal to his career—interfered to procure an armistice of four-and-twenty hours, with the object of averting a collision between the Pontifical troops and the National army. But

Pius IX. would hear of no concession, and avowed his determination to yield to force alone. Upon the conclusion of the armistice, General Cadorna summoned the city to surrender, and upon the summons being disregarded, commenced the bombardment of the walls. The Papal troops offered no effective resistance, and after a brief fire a breach was effected in the city walls hard by the Porta Pia. It was only upon a formal remonstrance being made at the Vatican by the diplomatic body against the useless shedding of blood, and after a certain number of lives had been needlessly sacrificed in a futile defence of the Papal flag, that the Pope consented to relinquish the idea of armed resistance. The Italians entered the city through the breach, and were enthusiastically welcomed by the inhabitants; and by the evening of the day on which the first shot had been fired, the flag of Italy waved over the Capitol.

On the 2nd October the form of a plébiscite was gone through, with the foregone result that annexation to the kingdom of Italy was decreed by an enormous popular vote, the numbers being 133,681 votes in favour of annexation to 1507 against it. On the 9th, a deputation arrived at Florence to convey the news to the King. The deputation was received at the Palazzo Pitti; and Victor Emmanuel, in accepting the offer of the proffered annexation, displayed an emotion which he had never before exhibited on similar occasions. The words in which he acknowledged the incorporation of Rome with

Italy were kingly and dignified. "At last," he said, "our arduous task is accomplished, and our country is reconstructed. The name of Rome, which is the grandest name uttered by the mouths of men, is joined with the name of Italy, the name which is dearest to my heart." It is significant that, even at the crowning moment of his life's triumph, Victor Emmanuel did not forget to proclaim his loyalty to the Church of Rome in the following words:—"As a King and as a Catholic, while I hereby proclaim the unity of Italy, I remain constant to my resolve to guarantee the liberty of the Church and the independence of the Supreme Pontiff." Whether the promise thus given has been fulfilled, or is capable of fulfilment, may be matter for controversy. But there can be no doubt as to the good faith with which it was made. Then, as always, Victor Emmanuel was sincere in his professions of devotion towards the Holy See, and in his desire to do everything for the Church, consistently with not abandoning the object of his life's ambition, which was from the beginning to the end the unification of Italy under the House of Savoy.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE TRANSFER OF THE CAPITAL.

WHEN once the Italian troops had made themselves masters of Rome, the work was done; and, alike by policy and inclination, Victor Emmanuel was not disposed to hurry forward the formal ceremonial which was to ratify the accomplished fact. Rome was entered by the Italian army in September, 1870, but it was not till the middle of the following year that the formal transfer of the capital was effected. During the interval, Florence still remained the capital of the Italian Government. It was there that, by a strange irony of fate, M. Thiers came to beg as a suppliant for the assistance of the nation the very possibility of whose existence as an independent Power he had derided throughout his life. The appeal was refused courteously, but decisively. For the Second Empire, and still more for the Emperor Napoleon, the King had a genuine feeling of affection and gratitude; for the Republic, and the Government of National Defence, he had neither love nor respect. It was

not the interest of Italy to assist France in prolonging a hopeless resistance, while the Italian monarchy had nothing to gain by identifying its fortunes with those of the Republic. On this occasion, as indeed throughout his life, a desire to promote, at one and the same time, the interests of Italy and those of the dynasty of Savoy, formed the ruling principle of all Victor Emmanuel's policy.

It was in accordance with this principle that the King warmly supported the offer made to his second son, Prince Amadeus, to accept the throne of Spain. By the influence of General Prim the offer was repeated; and at the close of 1870, the Prince—contrary, it is believed, to his own wishes, and in deference only to his father's urgent advice—consented to become King of Spain. Victor Emmanuel made no secret of the motives which governed his judgment in this matter. It was, he urged, an advantage for the newly-created Kingdom of Italy that an Italian Prince should rule over the Iberian Peninsula, while it was a triumph for the House of Savoy that another crown should be added to its possessions. A deputation arrived at Florence from Madrid to make a formal offer of the Spanish Throne to Prince Amadeus. After the offer had been accepted, the King remarked, in Piedmontese, "There is nothing left for me now but to put a pistol to my head. Higher than I have risen now I can never rise." The saying was uttered as a joke, and yet it expressed the vein of melancholy which,

from time to time, overpowered the strong animal spirits of the Soldier-King. Nothing, I may add here, could exceed Victor Emmanuel's personal distress when an attempt was made at Madrid to assassinate the Prince shortly before his abdication. He reproached himself bitterly with having advised Prince Amadeus to go to Spain at all, and yet, characteristically enough, he was reluctant to admit the necessity for abdication. To hold fast what you have got, was a motto of the House of Savoy which Victor Emmanuel could not bear to see infringed, even though he acknowledged the weight of the arguments which induced King Amadeus to resign the ungrateful task he had unwillingly undertaken.

Very shortly after the election of Prince Amadeus to the throne of Spain, the Italian Parliament assembled for the last time in Florence. In his address at the opening of the session, the King referred to the final triumph of the National cause in language not wanting in appropriate dignity. "With Rome," he said, "as the capital of Italy, I have fulfilled my promise, and crowned the enterprise which, three-and-twenty years ago, was undertaken by my illustrious father. My heart, as a king and as a son, is filled with a solemn exultation at having to salute here for the first time representatives assembled from all parts of our beloved country, and at being enabled to say to them, 'Italy is free and united; henceforth it depends upon us alone to make her also great and prosperous.'"

The parliamentary session had only just commenced, when Rome was visited by a terrible inundation caused by an extraordinary overflow of the Tiber. Collections were made throughout Italy for the relief of the victims of the inundation; and the King seized the opportunity to pay his first visit to Rome in a semi-private capacity, on the plea that he was anxious to see for himself what could be done to relieve the calamities caused by the floods. The official entry did not take place till the beginning of July. The Parliament of Florence was prorogued on 24th June, and a week later Victor Emmanuel took up his abode, as King, at the Palace of the Quirinal.

On the eve of his entering the Eternal City in state, the King sent a private message to the Pope, expressing his personal attachment to the Church, and his devotion to the Holy See. Amongst the most venerable traditions of the Vatican, there was one to the effect that no Pope had ever held his Pontificate beyond the space of a quarter of a century, allotted by legend to Saint Peter. This tradition was violated by Pius IX., who, only a few days before the King arrived at the Quirinal, celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his accession to the Papal throne. General Viale was deputed by Victor Emmanuel on this occasion to present himself at the Vatican, and congratulate the Holy Father in the King's name. The Pope, however, refused to receive the visit of

the royal envoy. Time after time, similar overtures of amity were made from the Quirinal to the Vatican, and always with the same result. From his own point of view, Pius IX. was justified in his refusal to enter into any relations with the King who had appropriated the Estates of the Holy See. But it would be a mistake to attribute these abortive overtures to a mere desire on the part of their author to place the Vatican in a false position in the eyes of Europe. There were few things Victor Emmanuel had more at heart than to effect a reconcilation with the Papacy; and this he desired quite as much on personal as on public grounds. He was prepared to make almost any sacrifice to remove from himself the burden of the Church's displeasure. The one sacrifice he could not consent to make was—that of the welfare of Italy, and of his dynasty. For all that, he was, after his own fashion, a sincere Catholic; and without a full appreciation of this fact, it is impossible to realise the magnitude of the temptation he resisted, when he elected to defy the anger of the Holy See, sooner than jeopardise his country and his throne.

CHAPTER XLIII.

LAST YEARS OF REIGN.

WITH the final entry into Rome, the romance of Victor Emmanuel's career may be said to have come to an end. During the seven years which still remained to him of life, he filled with success the position of the constitutional sovereign of a parliamentary monarchy. The difficulties of such a position, never slight in themselves, were aggravated in the present instance by the utter inexperience of the Italians in constitutional life, and by the extent to which all public issues were complicated by personal and local considerations. The services which, throughout this period, Victor Emmanuel was enabled to render to the cause of Italy, were of a negative rather than of a positive order; but none the less, they were very real ones. Great credit must fairly be assigned to the first King of Italy for the extent to which he subordinated his own views and preferences to the broad principle that, under parliamentary institutions, the policy of the State must ultimately be directed by the Parliament. Victor

Emmanuel had not one of those easy-going, indolent natures which cause their possessors to be thankful to any one who saves them the responsibility of making up their own minds. On the contrary, he had decided opinions of his own, entertained strong likes and dislikes of individual parties and politicians, and was by disposition impatient of control and jealous of interference. In the closing years of his reign, his personal influence was so strong, the authority of his name was so great, that if he had chosen to identify himself with any policy or party, he might easily have rendered the free working of parliamentary institutions in Italy a practical impossibility. As I have said before, I doubt greatly whether he had at any time any very keen appreciation of the abstract merits of constitutionalism as a system of government. But his shrewd common sense sufficed to teach him that, just as Italy could only have recovered her independence under free institutions, so, if the monarchy was to endure, it could only be by preserving to the full its constitutional character. With him this consideration outweighed all others—"We are at Rome, and we mean to stop there." Such was the explanation he gave about this period of the policy of Italy; and I believe if he had been called upon to explain his personal policy, with like frankness he would have stated that, having become King of Italy, he intended to remain King. Be this as it may, it is certain that he always chose his

Ministers in accordance with the votes of the parliamentary majority; that he always accepted and supported loyally the policy they recommended; that he never placed his own wishes in opposition to those of the party in power. If constitutional monarchy is not only established in the Peninsula, but has taken firm root in its soil, this result is due in no small degree to the self-control of the *Ré Galant'uomo.* Moreover, he was sustained by the conviction that if his Ministers were to propose any measure of policy which, in his judgment, was likely to be of vital injury to the interests of the country or the dynasty, the people in the last resort would always stand by him rather than by the Parliament. On the occasion of a ministerial crisis, which occurred about this time, he remarked, "The musicians may change, but the conductor of the orchestra is irremovable."

Still, to Victor Emmanuel, as a soldier and as a man of action, the vicissitudes of parliamentary contests in which parties were not divided by broad and intelligible issues, the perpetual struggles for place and power, the financial complications, the political intrigues which made up the history of Italy during the last seven years of his reign, could not fail to be signally distasteful. One after another, the statesmen with whom he had worked in the prime of his life passed away, and were succeeded by a generation of public men who, though perhaps not inferior to their predecessors in intellectual ability, were wanting in the public spirit and patriotism which are

generated in the days when a nation is fighting for independence and unity and dear life itself. "They are all leaving me," the King said, when he learned the news of Ratazzi's death. "I am not an old man yet, but already I feel myself a veteran amidst the public men of the day."

The chief public events of the period of which I write were the King's journeys to Vienna and Berlin, and the return visits of the Emperors of Germany and Austria. His reception at the Courts of the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns, as the sovereign of a great country, was deeply gratifying to the pride of Victor Emmanuel as the head of the House of Savoy. Moreover, his reconciliation with the Court of Vienna was to him the source of genuine personal satisfaction. Amidst all the excesses of his private life, he had retained a deep affection for the memory of the mother of his children, the young Austrian Princess who had loved him so truly and left him so soon. He knew well how keenly she had felt the antagonism which caused him to be the sworn enemy of her father's House; and the thought of the pleasure she would have experienced at seeing him an honoured and welcome guest at Schönbrun gave him a satisfaction which he manifested with almost childlike simplicity. Nor is there any reason to doubt the sincerity of his exclamation, when he was informed that the Emperor Francis Joseph, with high-bred delicacy, had selected Venice as the spot where he was to be received by the King on his visit to Italy:

"It is the act of true courage and self-abnegation. But had I been he, I could not have done it."

Though the close of Victor Emmanuel's career was one of almost unexampled prosperity in his capacity as King, it was not a very bright one in his private relations. Rome itself was never an abode after his own heart. He was out of his element in the sombre stateliness of the City of the Cæsars. Simple as was the Court-life of the Quirinal compared with that of other royal residences, yet the state and etiquette inseparable from a Court were repugnant to Victor Emmanuel's personal taste. Whenever he could get away, he betook himself to the mountains, where he could hunt at his pleasure, and could live amongst the peasants, whose society was more congenial to him than that of courtiers or ministers, or men of letters. It would be unfair to say that the King was indifferent to politics or literature or art. In all these things he could and did take an intelligent interest whenever his public duties required it of him. But when left to himself, he preferred the life of the camp and the chase to any other. In common with almost all those who have been devotees of field-sports, and who also have been men of pleasure, in the accepted sense of the phrase, he felt very keenly the approach of advancing years. Possessed of immense animal vigour, he had lived a hard life; and as he was getting on towards sixty, he experienced the gradual decline of vital energy, the absence of the old delight in the old pursuits, the sense of lassitude which comes to all

men at such a period, and above all to those who have found their pleasure in war and sport and gallantry. Then, too, it is said that as years went on he felt more acutely the disadvantages of the *quasi*-matrimonial relations into which he had entered. Again, as the King grew older, the sense of his quarrel with the Church weighed more keenly upon the mind of a Prince who had been born and bred and reared in the devout traditions of the House of Savoy. The idea of abdicating was again spoken of by the King at times, not altogether without serious meaning, though any purpose of this kind was always counteracted as soon as formed by the reflection that his own continuance on the throne was essential to the welfare of the cause to which he had devoted his life's energies. Thus it came to pass that, though his vigour remained unimpaired to the last, the keen enjoyment of life which had characterised his earlier years gave place towards the end to the constitutional melancholy which had beset his father, and to which his race had always been subject.

Yet whenever duty called, he was still the Victor Emmanuel whom his people knew, ready to stimulate the country to a sense of her high mission with stirring words and proud exhortations. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of his accession to the throne, deputations waited upon him from all parts of Italy, and from all bodies in the State. The answers to the addresses presented by these depu-

tations were drawn up, as usual, in consultation with the King; and in view of the end so near at hand, the unusually grave and outspoken language of the replies in question possesses an exceptional value of its own. From these replies I will only quote one passage, which occurs in the King's speech returning thanks to the municipalities of the kingdom, and which almost reads as if the speaker had wished to leave on record his own conception of the mission of his life.

"This memorable day recalls to me the thought of my noble father, who took the first steps in the cause of Italian Independence, and who gave the Statute of the Constitution to his people. Always preserve your gratitude to him, as I have preserved it also. From the day when I assumed the Crown, I regarded it as my sacred duty to continue the grand enterprise which he had commenced. The sense of this duty sustained me in the midst of all the difficulties and all the dangers through which we had to pass, in order to arrive at the goal which Italy had desired for so many centuries. . . . . Gentlemen, we may truly say that our lives have not been spent in vain, if we leave to our sons the legacy of a country not only united and free, but well governed, prosperous, and at peace."

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE END.

FELIX opportunate mortis may, I think, be well said of Victor Emmanuel. Up to within a few days of his death he enjoyed robust health, and led, well-nigh to the end, the life that he had chosen for himself. Long illness or the decrepitude of declining age would have been exceptionally painful to that vigorous nature. Short of dying on the battlefield, he could hardly have passed away more rapidly, or with less of the protracted agony of death, than after the fashion which Fate had allotted to him. As a public man, he had fulfilled the work he had set before himself. He had lived long enough to see Italy united and free, to behold the dynasty of Savoy advanced to the highest grandeur it had ever enjoyed throughout its chequered fortunes, and to know that his name would be associated for ever with the triumph of his country and the liberation of his people. Had he lived, as he well might have done, to witness the growth of a generation to whom the War of Independence was a tradition

only, he must have outlived the peculiar personal relations which identified him with the cause of Italy. As it was, a brighter lot was reserved for him. Full of days, if life is to be counted by events rather than by years; full of honours; worshipped by his people; esteemed by the world; beloved by his children—he died just when life for him had begun to lose its enjoyment, and when the record of his glory was on the eve of becoming dimmed by the gradual lapse of time. "I am not a good man," he said shortly before his death, "but she who is above" (alluding to his dead wife) "could never allow me to make other than a good death." Whatever may be thought of the logic of the argument, the anticipation thus expressed was, according to the speaker's lights, fulfilled to the letter.

On New Year's Day, 1878, Victor Emmanuel, as usual, held a reception at the Quirinal. At the end of the week he was to have left Rome for Turin, but on the 4th January, when he had arranged to give a State banquet to the Diplomatic Body, he felt so unwell that he had to depute the Crown Prince to preside at the banquet in his stead. No anxiety, however, was entertained at the outset. On the following day he received news of the death of General La Marmora, almost the last of the public men who had been intimately associated with him in the labours of his life. The news affected him very painfully, especially as of late years there had been a coldness between the King and his old

Minister. In the evening of this day the fever increased rapidly, and the malady began to be regarded as serious. Violent inflammation of the lungs set in, and within four days from the commencement of the King's illness the doctors had given up all hope of his recovery. On the morning of the 9th his physicians felt it their duty to inform him that the end was near, and that he would do well to prepare for death. The announcement took Victor Emmanuel greatly by surprise, as he had not realised his own condition. But he bore the tidings with the same fearless courage he had so often displayed on the field of battle. "Is it come to that?" was the only comment he made; "then send for the priest." Considerable delay was experienced in carrying out the dying man's request, as the clergy hesitated about administering the Last Sacraments to the King without special permission from the Vatican. Towards the close of the day, however, the requisite permission was received at the Quirinal. With great pain and difficulty, Victor Emmanuel was raised up in his bed to receive the Sacrament, and then, murmuring something about Turin and his children, which the bystanders could hardly follow, he fell back, and died without a struggle.

Thus at last his life's fitful fever was over. If I have succeeded in conveying the estimate I have formed of Victor Emmanuel, I have depicted, or rather sought to depict, the character of a man with great qualities, many failings, high ambitions, and

strong passions, but, both in his virtues and in his faults, above all, a man. Extraordinary genius, or talent of the highest order, it would be mere flattery to ascribe to him. The moral of his life is rather that, given the opportunity, common sense, vigorous energy, and good faith are sufficient to enable a man not great in himself to do great things, and to leave behind him a name for ever. If upon his tomb it were desired to chronicle his career in one short sentence, I would have inscribed thereon, with a slight modification, the motto of his race. In lieu of the words, *J'attains mon aistre*, I would have had engraved upon his sepulchre the words, "I have attained my star." To have fulfilled one's life's ambition is given to few men, but to none hardly has it been given more fully than to the Prince who was born the last Duke of Savoy and died the first King of Italy.

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